



Aboriginal news from across Turtle Island and beyond
October 16 – 23, 2015

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Aboriginal Arts & Culture

Inuit Art Foundation welcomes new leadership

"The board is committed to serving the needs of Inuit artists from across Inuit Nunangat"

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, October 15, 2015 - 2:45 pm



The Museum of Inuit Art's curator, Alysa Procida, left, is pictured here with the Matchbox Gallery's Jim Shirley, centre and artist Pierre Aupilardjuk, right, at the opening of a 2014 exhibition of the gallery's permanent collection. (PHOTO BY SARAH ROGERS)

The Inuit Art Foundation has a few new faces at its helm.

Alysa Procida, the former executive director and curator at Toronto's Museum of Inuit Art, is the foundation's new executive director, the organization announced Oct. 7.

During the foundation's recent annual general meeting, its board of directors voted Kuujuaq visual artist Sammy Kudluk, formerly the IAF's vice president, as its new chair.

West Baffin Eskimo Co-op's Jimmy Manning remains president of the foundation, while Iqaluit-based jeweller and visual artist Mathew Nuqingaq was elected as its vice president.

"These leadership and management changes reflect the renewed capability and vigor of the Inuit Art Foundation," said Jimmy Manning in an Oct. 7 release. "The board is committed to ensuring that the Foundation continues to serve the needs of Inuit artists from across Inuit Nunangat."

“We are pleased to have Alysa join us as she will bring not only strong management skills but familiarity with Inuit art and culture.”

Returning directors include Helen Kaloon, Okpik Pitseolak, Billy Gauthier and Pat Feheley.

The Inuit Art Foundation, which has offices in Ottawa and Toronto, works to promote Inuit artists and their work throughout Canada and the world, while supporting the work of artists at home.

The foundation has undergone a major restructuring in recent years, since [the IAF abruptly shut down in March 2012](#), reportedly following money problems.

An evaluation by the federal government, who at the time provided the organization’s \$458,000 annual grant, gave the IAF a mixed review, saying the foundation had failed to forge partnerships and do enough outreach to its stakeholders.

But the foundation re-established six months later with a new board of directors, and [launched a 13-stop, 18-month-long consultation across the North](#) to learn how to better serve Inuit artists.

The foundation also opened a Toronto office with the goal of reaching out to a more international audience.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674inuit_art_foundation_welcomes_new_leadership/

Vancouver indigenous history exhibition wins Governor General's award

THE CANADIAN PRESS October 16, 2015

VANCOUVER - A collaborative exhibition looking at Vancouver's indigenous roots is being celebrated for contributing to Canadian history.

"Casnaem, The City Before the City" has been named the winner of this year's Governor General's history award for excellence in museums.

The exhibit combines artifacts and new technologies such as 3-D printing at three different locations to tell the story of the ancient Musqueam villages and burial sites that Vancouver was built on.

Casnaem was founded about 5,000 years ago at what was then the mouth of the Fraser River, and today is the southern border of the Marpole neighbourhood.

Different aspects of the exhibition are being shown at the Museum of Vancouver, the University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology and the Musqueam Cultural Centre through January 2016.

Museum of Vancouver CEO Nancy Noble says the exhibit has allowed the museum to confront its own colonial past and begin reconciling misconceptions about Musqueam people.

Direct Link:

<http://www.vancouver.sun.com/life/vancouver+indigenous+history+exhibition+wins+governor+general/11443725/story.html>

MAĪNA: First Time Ever, Innu and Kuujjuaq Inuit help Director Michael Poulette finance Indigenous Film

[Lee Allen](#)

10/16/15

TV Adaptation of book will star Roseanne Supernault (Metis Cree) and Co-stars Graham Greene, Tantoo Cardinal, and Natar Ungalaaq .

When you're filming a story about indigenous peoples in the frozen tundra and want to make it authentic, you take what nature gives you. In the case of *MAĪNA* and its 'conflicts with men from the land of ice' as quoted on the film's website, in the glacial cold of Canada's Northwoods, it was minus 30 degrees Centigrade when the cameras rolled.

"We moved both with --- and against --- the elements as Mother Nature played her own role," says Roseanne Supernault (Metis Cree) who stars as an Innu woman caught between two of America's founding nations (Innus and Inuits) prior to European contact.

What began as a TV adaptation of novelist Dominique Demers book turned into a unique film once veteran director Michel Poulette was brought on board. "My passion is telling stories and my interest was piqued in a project that called for a multi-cultural cast and crew to work together in natural surroundings. Every project is an open door to a new world and even though everybody said this was a bad idea, once I met with tribal leaders, I knew I had to move forward."



French movie poster - Courtesy MAINA

And for the first time in Canadian film history, the two indigenous communities involved (Innu First Nation and the Kuujjuaq Inuit people) provided project financing because they saw the movie as a way to help preserve their culture and language. This film is believed to be the first film collaboration between white, Innu, and Inuit --- “The first time members of these two tribes have ever seen their people in a movie featured as the center of the story,” Poulette says.

“For the first time EVER, Innus can look at themselves on the big screen, speaking their own language. Our youth are offered strong characters they can identify with,” says Jean-Charles Pietacho, Chief, Ekuanitshit.

MAÏNA is an adventure story and a love story, a contemporary film set 700 years ago where a clash of cultures centers around a fear of differences --- of “the other” --- and how that fear can be conquered by getting to know one another. “It’s both a feature film and a documentary that youth can see and feel pride the story is about their people and the culture of several centuries ago. The story is respectful and based on reality,” notes Poulette.

Co-stars Graham Greene, Tantoo Cardinal, and Natar Ungalaaq bring their cinematic backgrounds from other productions such as *Dances With Wolves*, *Smoke Signals*, *Black Robe*, and *The Green Mile*.

Poulette, with 30 years experience in both TV and cinema, met many new challenges in making this movie. First off, he insisted on cultural accuracy while he shot in four language versions (Innu, Inuktitut, French, and English) with subtitles. “I insisted the characters speak in their own language and hired consultants and specialists to minimize

dialogue and make it realistic. Because one tribe's language uses a dozen words to describe one word, we often employed a look or a silence that took the place of verbage. We also enlisted the help of anthropologists and cultural experts to make our story historically and culturally accurate."

The film proved difficult to research, finance, and distribute, but filming went well --- if you exclude weather conditions. "It was spring, and cold, when we began shooting the Inuit part that involved six actual igloos," remembers Poulette (smiling now, but not then). "Overnight, the weather switched and in minutes, the igloos began melting down one after one." The warming did attract wilderness spectators however as a group of caribou came out of nowhere to watch the ice houses melt.

Reaction to the project has been prompt and positive. "The Native community in Canada has embraced the movie because actors they can relate to now have room on the big screen," says Poulette. "We've won over a dozen awards at American Indian and First Nation film festivals in the states and Europe."

Video of Maïna - Trailer [HD]

"Everyone associated with the film, no matter their ethnic background, made every possible effort to understand the cultures involved and work together harmoniously against any prejudices about First Nations," says Supernault.

"This is a groundbreaking film that can be a showcase and a catalyst of what happens when different kinds of First Nations peoples come together with non-native filmmakers all working toward the same goal. We've been knocking on Hollywood's door for decades and if it did open it was at their will, on their own time and dime, and we were unable to tell our authentic stories. MAÏNA is a touchstone for what can happen when Native people are given more power in the film industry."

Director Poulette agrees: "If deciding to film MAÏNA makes me a mentor to the next generation of Native filmmakers, I'm happy to be that because this movie touched me. I think what will happen is a new wave of First Nation movie makers will start filming their own projects. It's time."

View a short film preview at www.MAÏNAthemovie.com/#trailer.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/10/16/maina-first-time-ever-innu-and-kuujuaq-inuit-help-director-michael-poulette-finance>

Mother, daughter travel to Montana for Bookfest



Carrie Roxburgh, left, and her daughter Kaeleigh Roxburgh, right, of Stittsville hold the finalist and winner's plaques which they accepted at the High Plains Bookfest in Billings, Montana, on behalf of author the late Cheryl Chad who is Kaeleigh's grandmother. Cheryl Chad's book "Back To Batoche" won the award for 2015 Best Children's Book.

Stittsville News

By [John Curry](#), Oct 16, 2015

Eleven year old Kaeleigh Roxburgh of Stittsville and her mother Carrie travelled to Billings, Montana on the weekend of Oct. 3-4 to attend the annual High Plains Bookfest and Book Awards ceremony in Billings, Montana. They did this as a way of honouring Kaeleigh's grandmother, the late Cheryl Chad whose children's novel "Back to Batoche" was a finalist in in Bookfest competition.

Little did they realize that their trip to Billings would turn into a celebration but this is what happened as it was announced at the Saturday night High Plains Bookfest awards banquet that not only was "Back to Batoche" a finalist in the competition but that it was the winner of the 2015 Best Children's Book award.

Kaeleigh accepted the award on behalf of her late grandmother, receiving congratulations from dignitaries such as the mayor Billings and other authors.

Kaeleigh even had the opportunity to autograph several copies of the book, not only because it was written by her late grandmother but also because her namesake is one of the main characters in the book.

Kaeleigh's late grandmother, Cheryl Chad, had a lifelong dream of being an author. She worked in the federal government in Ottawa but took numerous writing workshops and in retirement, she became a published author with her children's novel "Back to Batoche" which was published in May 2014. It was just after the book was published that Cheryl was diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer and she passed away six weeks later.

Although "Back to Batoche" is historical fiction, Cheryl did a lot of research so that her portrayal of Metis life, the Battle of Batoche and accounts of Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont and other Metis leaders were accurate. The story involves three children, named and modelled after Cheryl's grandchildren Kaeleigh, Max and Liam Roxburgh, who find

a pocket watch which magically transports them back to 1885 and the Battle of Batoche. It is historical time travel.

In the book, Kaeleigh, Max and Liam are transported, thanks to the magical pocket watch, back in time to the eve of the Battle of Batoche in 1885 where they experience first hand what life was like for the Metis in Batoche as Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont led their people in the defense of their land, their homes and their way of life.

In writing the book, Cheryl talked a lot to Max who is Kaeleigh's older brother to try to ensure that the book reflected how a 12 year old would tell the story. That's because the story is told through Max's eyes and voice. While Max is the narrator for the story, Kaeleigh's role in the book is being the voice of reason, warning about why something may get the trio in trouble. Kaeleigh's twin brother Liam has a comic relief role in the book.

The book's description "About the author", written in 2014, describes Cheryl Chad as follows: "Cheryl Chad has been writing stories for children for several years. She has also written non-fiction articles that have appeared in periodicals and newspapers. Since her retirement from federal public service in 2009, she has made writing children's works of fiction her passion. "The Kid Wiz of Wackabie" and "Grumblesnort" were released in 2010. Ms. Chad grew up on the prairies and has lived in various parts of Canada. "Back to Batoche" was written after returning to Saskatchewan in 2007 where she lived for almost seven years. She recently moved back to Ottawa to be closer to her children and grandchildren, who inspire her to write."

Kaeleigh, who is in grade six at St. Stephen Catholic School in Stittsville, has heard the book read at her school with a positive reaction. The book is written for youth in the grade five/six range but reports indicate that adults are also enjoying reading it.

Kaeleigh, along with her mother Carrie and her two brothers, did visit Batoche in 2014 after the death of her grandmother. Batoche is now a National Historic Site. While there, they saw the pocket watch which was on display and which served as the time machine in Cheryl Chad's book. They also visited the gift shop there where the book "Back to Batoche" is currently a best seller.

Kaeleigh admits that she used to be not much of a fan of history but now, as a result of her late grandmother's book, she likes history. She also finds the "time travel" aspect of the book interesting.

Proceeds generated by the sale of "Back to Batoche" are being put in a special account to help Cheryl Chad's five grandchildren with future expenses related to university. This includes the \$500 in prize money which came with winning the High Plains Bookfest Book Award.

And there will be a sequel to this award-winning book. It is another historical novel that Cheryl Chad had about two-thirds completed at the time of her death. It is a story about

the driving of the last spike of the Canadian Pacific Railway at Craigellachie, B.C. in Nov. 1885 as told from the viewpoint of an unknown young boy who is seen in the historic and now famous photograph which was taken of Donald Alexander Smith driving in the so-called “last spike” to complete Canada’s first transcontinental railroad. The family is now going to complete this sequel and tell yet another chapter of Canada’s history via a Cheryl Chad historical children’s novel.

The High Plains Bookfest and Book Awards in Billings, Montana is a book competition which draws numerous nominations in various categories. The winners are selected by a panel of independent judges.

Billings, Montana is the largest city in the state of Montana, with a 2013 population of 109,059, making it the only city in Montana with over 100,000 people. It is a trade and distribution centre for most of the state of Montana as well as northern Wyoming and the western portions of North Dakota and South Dakota. It is within 100 miles of the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.

Montana itself is in the western United States with a long border with Canada. It is known for its mountains with numerous mountain ranges within its boundaries.

The Batoche National Historic Site in Saskatchewan is the site of the historic Battle of Batoche during the Northwest Rebellion of 1885. The battle resulted in the capture of Louis Riel and the defeat of the Metis by Canadian troops.

Batoche was declared a National Historic Site of Canada in 1923. Its visitor centre features a multimedia presentation about the history of the community and its inhabitants. There are several restored buildings with costumed interpreters who depict the lifestyles of the Metis of Batoche between 1860 and 1900. The site is open from mid-May through mid-September.

Direct Link: <http://www.ottawacommunitynews.com/news-story/5963849-mother-daughter-travel-to-montana-for-bookfest/>

Aboriginal Business & Finance

Modest Port Hardy Inn becoming luxury hotel with First Nations theme

[Carla Wilson](#) / Times Colonist
October 17, 2015 06:00 AM



Artist's rendering of the Kwa'lilas Hotel in Port Hardy, which will feature a Long House design.

Photograph By Malcolm McSporran of Quninkatla Development Planning Inc. and Tohmm Cobban of Tohmm Cobban Architect

Every inch of the modest Port Hardy Inn is being renovated through the winter to transform it into a luxury First Nations themed hotel featuring a traditional big house-inspired design.

It will emerge in late spring as the Kwa'lilas Hotel, meaning a place to sleep, offering First Nations experiences, art and improved amenities.

“What we are doing in Port Hardy is a piece to the overall puzzle of our economic development that the Gwa’sala ‘Nakwaxda’xw First Nation started about five years ago,” said Conrad Browne, CEO of the band’s K’awat’si Economic Development Corp.

A community economic development plan identified tourism potential, Browne said Friday from Port Hardy, on northeast Vancouver Island.

The band has 960 members, including 260 younger than 12 years old, he said.

With that in mind, the Kwa'lilas Hotel will deliver training and employment opportunities to band members now and in the future, Browne said. It will have more than 40 full-time employees, plus others providing services such as drum-making, story-telling experiences and language classes.

Outdoor nature-based experience, such as riding fast tidal rapids, will also be offered.

It’s hoped that the hotel will help revitalize the northern part of Vancouver Island.

The band bought the hotel this year for about \$1 million. Immediately, \$350,000 was spent on necessary upgrading, such as new beds and linens, Browne said. Another \$3.5 million will be spent on the winter construction and improvements, he said.

A marketing plan aims to attract international and domestic visitors. Marketing will be done in conjunction with aboriginal tourism organizations.

The hotel is closing in November for the renovation.

Clean lines, plenty of cedar, large beams and a smoke-hole in the roof will all evoke its First Nation ownership, Browne said.

During the temporary closing, Port Hardy Inn bookings will be honoured at the nearby Seagate Hotel. The 55-room, mid-range hotel was also recently purchased by the band. It will be called Pier Side Landing and is currently being renovated.

The Port Hardy Inn's 60-seat pub is staying open during construction and will be converted into a lounge. Seto's restaurant is leased and will also continue to operate. The menu will be expanded to include traditional First Nations food such as salmon and bannock.

When the Kwa'lilas Hotel opens, all guest and meeting rooms will feature an aboriginal motif, said Scott Roberts, an associate of Mizare Hospitality, which is helping with the overhaul. A group of elders will decide the art from band members that will be displayed and sold in a boutique.

Along with a complete renovation of its 85 rooms, including two executive suites, another 4,000 square feet of conference centre space will be upgraded for corporate and special events. It is well-located for First Nations conferences, Roberts said.

An unused pool will be redone and a fitness centre is being added, Browne said.

The project's team of architects, designers and artists include Malcolm McSporran of Quinkatla Development Planning Inc., Tohmm Cobban and Judy Henderson of Inside Design Studios and Shain Jackson of Spirit Works Ltd.

Hotels are just one part of the band's economic development plans. It has spent \$2.2 million on a new cold storage facility of about 30,000 square feet to serve seafood processors, Browne said.

The band also has a shellfish aquaculture pilot project underway.

- See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/business/modest-port-hardy-inn-becoming-luxury-hotel-with-first-nations-theme-1.2088366#sthash.qILsxVnL.dpuf>

Pay your debt, reduce your spending, Nunavut Trust warns NTI

**Trust's earning power diminished by unpaid capital loans,
volatile financial markets**

STEVE DUCHARME, October 21, 2015 - 8:50 am



Nunavut Trust officials at NTI's general meeting in Iqaluit Oct. 20. From left to right: Nute Arnauyumauq, Qikiqtani trustee, Fern Elliot, chief executive officer of the Nunavut Trust; and Sean Kulik, chief financial officer of the Nunavut Trust. (PHOTO BY STEVE DUCHARME)

Nunavut Tunngavik's annual general meeting began Oct. 20 with a reminder from the Nunavut Trust that NTI should pay its outstanding debt to the Trust and reduce its spending because of stormy global markets looming on the horizon that threaten to reduce the Trust's earning power.

But NTI executives did not seem overly concerned about curbing their spending habits.

"It seems like we are continually being reminded on our loan, which is okay," said NTI vice president James Eetoolook after the Nunavut Trust delegation's presentation.

The Nunavut Trust manages and invests the \$1.114 billion settlement that Inuit received through the 1993 Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

NTI borrowed more than \$146 million in its early years to pay start-up costs for itself and the three regional Inuit organizations.

They were supposed to [restore all the Trust's capital by 2007](#) — but never did.

NTI has made [substantial gains](#) over the past few years in paying down that debt to the Trust —but they still owe over \$32 million.

"I detect there's a hint of being told not to spend so much, but if it wasn't for us, the money wouldn't be there," Eetoolook continued.

Eetoolook was likely referring to the work of the original negotiating body for the NLCA, Tungavik Federation of Nunavut, which morphed into NTI after 1993.

NTI's debt to the Trust represents subtractions from the original sum received through the NLCA.

And Fern Elliot, the CEO of the Nunavut Trust, reminded NTI delegates about how that debt was created.

“NTI could not have functioned effectively in the early years if it had not been able to borrow from the capital of the Trust,” Elliot said.

“There were simply not enough assets in the Trust to generate substantial income that could be distributed to NTI, and NTI had no other revenue sources.”

That money was used to transform the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut into NTI, which is financed each year from the Trust’s investment earnings.

NTI keeps some of this money for itself and distributes the remainder to regional Inuit associations.

Last year, the Nunavut Trust gave NTI \$87.1 million to be spread between them and the three RIAs.

However, because the original capital loans to NTI were subtracted from the principal sum received through the 1993 NLCA settlement, it lessened the Trusts’ ability to earn money and the investment power of the Nunavut Trust was weakened.

So far, the Trust has missed out on more than \$182 million in additional distribution money, in part because beneficiary organizations have been spending outside the Trust’s “ability to earn” each year.

The legal mandate of the Nunavut Trust is to maintain the original sum paid through the NLCA, accounting for interest, and to distribute the income earned each year on its principal to beneficiary organizations.

But in recent years, struggling global financial markets have seen the Trust’s earnings diminish.

In 2014, returns from investments — the income that gets distributed to beneficiary organizations — were worth 12 per cent of the principal sum, down from an exceptionally high rate of return of 24 per cent in 2013.

But halfway through 2015, returns from the trust are estimated at only 7.63 per cent.

Nunavut Trust has an internal objective to achieve a minimum return of 6 per cent annually to maintain the value of the principal, accounting for inflation, while still distributing a minimum of 4 per cent.

While they expect that returns will fluctuate from year to year, the current global market is affecting the Trust’s ability to maintain the substantial gains seen in 2013 and 2014.

“What we know is that the market is not going to give us those kinds of returns [in 2013 and 2014],” Elliot said.

The bright side of the Nunavut Trust’s sobering presentation is that NTI is currently sitting on \$85 million given to them as part of a settlement agreement with the Government of Canada earlier this year [in a deal that settled NTI’s longstanding lawsuit](#) against Ottawa.

NTI is using an additional \$175 million in settlement money from Ottawa to establish the Nunavut Inuit Training Corp., whose goal will be to help educate Inuit for government jobs.

The NTI AGM continues until Oct. 22 at Nanook School in Apex.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674pay_your_debt_reduce_your_spending_nunavut_trust_warns_nti/

IronPlanet holds first live heavy-equipment auction in Canada at River Cree

[David Howell, Edmonton Journal](#)

Published on: October 21, 2015 | Last Updated: October 21, 2015 5:07 PM MDT



IronPlanet president Jeff Jete at an online live unreserved public heavy equipment auction held at River Cree Resort in Edmonton on October 21, 2015. Larry Wong / Edmonton Journal

Enoch — Clinton Coyne came away from a fast-paced heavy-equipment auction Wednesday empty-handed but still enthusiastic.

“This is a very good format they’ve got here,” Coyne said at the River Cree Resort, where U.S.-based auctioneer IronPlanet held a Cat Auction Services live unreserved public auction — the first such event in Canada.

Coyne owns a Wetaskiwin company that rents out construction equipment. He had his eyes on a pair of D8T Caterpillar crawler tractors — lots 170 and 171 in the coil-bound catalogue — but lost out to online bidders with deeper pockets.

“I didn’t get,” he said with a shrug. “I was close. But it doesn’t matter. It’s no big deal.”

Wednesday’s auction was hosted by Vancouver-based Finning International, the world’s largest Caterpillar dealer. Finning announced in August it had agreed to market used machinery through Iron Planet and Cat Auction Services.

Before its April merger with Cat Auction Services, IronPlanet was primarily an online marketplace for heavy equipment sales, with more than 1.4 million registered users worldwide and more than \$4 billion US in sales since 2000.

At the River Cree, an auctioneer and his ringmen solicited bids from about 100 bidders in a packed meeting room. Another 13,676 people took part online. One bidder in Georgia paid \$375,000 Cdn for a 2013 Caterpillar D8T.

Whether they were in the room or online, all bidders saw video and photos of the equipment on a leaderboard that also tracked asking prices and high bids.

Consigned equipment was stockpiled at a yard in the Acheson industrial park outside Edmonton. Other equipment was elsewhere in Canada. A Caterpillar crawler tractor in Fort St. John, B.C. sold for \$90,000 to an Alberta online bidder.

Jeff Jeter, president of IronPlanet, said heavy equipment buyers and sellers in Edmonton are familiar and comfortable with the auction format, in part because major competitor Ritchie Bros. has such a strong presence here.

“And, as you’re aware, there’s a lot of equipment in this part of the world,” Jeter said.

He said IronPlanet plans four or five auctions in Edmonton next year.

Gary Agnew, vice-president of business development with Finning’s Canadian operations, watched the auction from the back of the room.

“There’s a good energy,” Agnew said. “Bidding’s been strong. I’ve seen customers from Texas, from Florida, from New Hampshire, from Minnesota, all buy lots on the stage this morning.”

The arrangement with IronPlanet offers Finning several business advantages, Agnew said. When used Caterpillar equipment gets sold at auction, Finning learns who bought it and can follow up with parts and service.

“This gives us an absolute hard-wired connection to who the new owner is and allows us to establish a new relationship or maybe refocus a relationship (with a customer) who maybe hasn’t done business with us for a period of time.”

Direct Link: <http://edmontonjournal.com/business/local-business/ironplanet-holds-first-live-heavy-equipment-auction-in-canada-at-river-cree>

Aboriginal Community Development

Winnipeg's Muslim, indigenous communities rally for unity

'No to fear, yes to unity,' is the theme at Saturday's rally

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 17, 2015 7:56 AM CT Last Updated: Oct 17, 2015 5:02 PM CT



For Shahina Siddiqui, president of the Islamic Social Services Association, support from fellow Canadians is critical as the election approaches. ((CBC))

Members of Winnipeg's Muslim and indigenous communities are coming together on Saturday for "Our Canada, One Canada," a rally that encourages people to vote in the name of unity throughout the country.

The rally, its organizers say, is a reaction to fear-based campaigning, and for Islamic Social Services president Shahina Siddiqui, support from fellow Canadians is critical leading up to the election.

"When you are targeted the way we have been and scrutinized and singled out and treated as the other, you want to tell yourself this is not the majority of Canadians," she said.



More than 100 people attended the "Our Canada, One Canada" rally at the Manitoba Legislature Saturday afternoon. (Alana Cole/CBC)

"But, when there is silence, you kind of question yourself."

The rally's theme, "No to fear, yes to unity," is one that Siddiqui says will become Canada's reality when it is recognized at an individual level.

"We kind of sit back and not get involved, thinking, 'What can one voice matter? What can one vote matter?'" But, it does," she said.

"Our democracy is only as good as how active the citizens are."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/winnipeg-s-muslim-indigenous-communities-rally-for-unity-1.3276268>

Friendship centre offers safe trick-or-treating in Winnipeg's North End

Safe Halloween event is still looking for candy donations and volunteers.



The Safe Halloween committee at the Indian and Metis Friendship Centre is working to organize the 2015 Safe Halloween event.

By: [Dave Baxter](#) Metro Published on Sun Oct 18 2015

Some violent incidents in Winnipeg's North End back in 2010 had many parents too scared to even take their kids out for Halloween, so the Indian and Metis Friendship Centre decided to bring trick-or-treating indoors, and make it an annual tradition.

For the sixth October in a row the Friendship Centre will host their Safe Halloween event that invites kids from the community to come trick-or-treating right in their building.

"About six years ago we had a lot of crime in the neighbourhood, and we heard a lot of concerns from the people that they were afraid to leave their homes and take the kids out for Halloween," said Friendship Centre worker Bill Greenwalt.

Greenwalt said there was rash of shootings in 2010, just days before Halloween.

"So people were coming here saying they didn't want to take their kids trick-or-treating and that's what started it."

With less than a week to set up, the centre held an indoor trick-or-treat event in 2010, and since then have held an annual Safe Halloween event.

"It has developed into this huge thing," said Friendship Centre worker Kerri Johnston, who said they average about 1,500 kids coming through the doors every year.

Staff and volunteers who take part, and kids who come to get candy have a good time, said Johnston, but she said the main focus is always about keeping kids safe.

"We are definitely helping with safety on Halloween, and we are contributing to ending violence."

The centre gets a huge candy donation every year from Winnipeg Harvest, but still needs additional donations of candy and Halloween decorations, and also needs volunteers.

Anyone that would like to donate or volunteer can call Johnston at the Friendship Centre at 204-586-8441, or drop donations off right at the Friendship Centre.

Safe Halloween goes from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Halloween night at the Indian and Metis Friendship Centre at 45 Robinson St.

Direct Link: <http://www.metronews.ca/news/winnipeg/2015/10/19/friendship-centre-offers-safe-trick-or-treating-in-winnipegs-nor.html>

Air Creebec To Operate Medical Air Charter in Quebec

Posted 22 October 2015 by [NetNewsLedger](#) in [Business](#)



Air Creebec Dash 8

THUNDER BAY – BUSINESS – Air Creebec and the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay have signed an agreement to establish a medical air charter to transport patients from remote First Nations communities of James Bay, Quebec, to Val-D'Or and Montreal. Starting October 26, 2015, one of three specially equipped Dash-8-100 turboprop planes will operate a service called the Cree Patient Air Shuttle, flying four times a week between Chisasibi Airport (YKU) on the eastern James Bay coast, and, on alternate days, the cities of Val-d'Or (YVO) and Montreal (YUL).

People living in northern Quebec are often required to travel south when they are sick. Even by air, this is a journey that can take all day. Chisasibi Hospital is the only hospital in the James Bay region of northern Quebec, an area of about 450,000 km² of sparsely populated boreal forest that is home to the Cree of Eeyou Istchee. Chisasibi hospital has an emergency department and in-patient ward with 29 beds, but is not equipped or staffed to offer services such as delivering babies, surgery, cancer treatment, or advanced

diagnostics like MRI. For these types of services, patients must leave the region, sometimes for extended periods of time.

“By having a dedicated patient shuttle, our patients will travel more quickly and comfortably to their appointments, specialist consultations, diagnostic tests and surgeries,” says Chisasibi physician Dr. Darlene Kitty, President of the Council of Physicians, Dentists and Pharmacists of the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB).

The CBHSSJB, in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Social Services of Quebec, operates Chisasibi Hospital and smaller clinics in each of the nine remote Cree First Nation (Eeyou/Eenou) communities of Eeyou Istchee, with a total population of 17,150 in 2014. The CBHSSJB’s Cree Patient Services department coordinates travel, lodging and medical appointments for patients who must leave their home community to obtain needed health services, usually in Val-d’Or, Montreal or Chibougamau. Between April 2014 and March 2015, 8,427 patients were sent for medical treatment outside their home community. On a typical day, the CBHSSJB is responsible for approximately 300 Cree patients and family members, who are away from home for medical reasons.

[Air Creebec](#) has adapted three Bombardier Dash-8-100 turboprop aircraft to accommodate a stretcher and in-flight auxiliary nurse. Along with patients, who may be accompanied by a family member in some cases, the shuttle will be available to transport medical personnel and sensitive cargo such as blood samples and medical supplies. “Air Creebec are indeed very pleased with the agreement with the Cree Health Board,” says Matthew Happyjack, President of Air Creebec. “We could see that the Cree Health Board had enough daily volume of passengers that it would make sense to run a charter instead of sending them on the regular commercial flights. Our clients will now know that their loved ones will be given the best care and service possible. They will experience the comfort of an Air Creebec charter.”

At Montreal’s Trudeau Airport, the Cree Patient Shuttle will take off and land at Air Creebec’s FBO terminal, allowing passengers to bypass the crowds and lineups of the main terminal. Passengers will benefit from swift check-in procedures and personalized attention.

The Cree Patient Air Shuttle is expected to generate significant and permanent cost savings for the Quebec healthcare system, since the passengers using the shuttle were formerly travelling on regular commercial flights at a higher per capita cost per trip. While the shuttle is not designed for medical emergencies, in some cases it may enable the CBHSSJB to avoid the use of more expensive air ambulances.

“This project was initiated by our Board of Directors and the Chairperson, Bella Moses Petawabano,” says Dr. Yv Bonnier-Viger, Executive Director of the CBHSSJB. “The reason we are doing this is for the patients – for their quality of life. The fact that this is also a more cost effective approach is what will make it sustainable.” The Cree Patient Air Shuttle is part of a strategy to improve support for patients during their medical trips. “We also want to improve the quality of the lodgings and food services for patients in

Val-d'Or and Montreal,” continues Bonnier-Viger. At the same time, telehealth initiatives such as remote ultrasound and tele-psychiatry are helping reduce the need to travel outside the territory for certain patients. The CBHSSJB is also investing in bringing more specialized services to the north, either permanently or on a rotating basis, rather than making patients travel south. For example, the opening of a dialysis clinic in Mistissini in 2014 enabled some patients to return home after years of living in Montreal.

The maiden flight of the Cree Patient Air Shuttle service will take off for Montreal following a ceremony and blessing of the plane by Chisasibi elder Eliza Webb at Chisasibi Airport on October 26, 2015. The Cree Patient Air Shuttle marks the beginning of a new era of more comfortable, convenient, and efficient travel for Cree patients and their families.

- See more at: <http://www.netnewsledger.com/2015/10/22/air-creebec-to-operate-medical-air-charter-in-quebec/#sthash.y7b0WIVT.dpuf>

Attack 'underscores' dire need to support First Nations: Chief

Bridge River band staff lacked adequate training to provide social support to community

By [Brandon Barrett](#)



SHAKEN The Lillooet area was shaken by a violent attack last week at the Xwisten band office in Bridge River. The Fraser River is pictured above.

Aboriginal leaders from across B.C. are calling on Canada's new federal government to step up its support to First Nations communities in the aftermath of a devastating attack at a band office near Lillooet.

Last Wednesday, Oct. 14, an assailant entered several Bridge River Indian Band office buildings and began beating employees with a hammer, injuring 11, including two who were left in serious condition.

Police attended to find the attacker restrained by individuals on the scene. Police said they were unable to transport the suspect as he had become unconscious and unresponsive and could not be resuscitated. He has been identified by the coroner as 22-year-old David James.

"Our band office staff had been working with this young man to develop a realistic plan for stable housing, and a way for him to pay his rent," said Chief Susan James, who is not related to the assailant, in a release. "He had complex social and health needs that our staff did not have the resources or training to adequately respond to. And when the situation became overwhelming for him, he lashed out."

James went on to explain that the band's social development staff are "essentially financial clerks" without the training or tools to provide the type of social and counselling support many in the community so desperately require.

It's a challenge that's not isolated to Bridge River, either, noted Tl'Azt'En Nation Dr. Terri Aldred, who does outreach work in isolated First Nations communities.

"Very oftentimes First Nations communities are staffed, thankfully, by a lot of local people, but unfortunately they're often asked to be put in roles that they haven't had the opportunity to train for, which can create a lot of unsafe situations, and in some cases, tragic situations," she said. "I feel like a relatively obvious solution is to provide training for things like basic first aid (and handling trauma) for everybody in the community so there's that baseline."

The answer, said Aldred, is not simply throwing money at the problem, but realizing that each community has its own specific issues that can only be addressed if the members of that community are part of the discussion.

"There's a really big need to try and build and allocate resources now with an indigenous focus and an indigenous input, so that the outcome will be better because the people it's intended for will have more say on how to make it more effective," Aldred noted.

As the Xwisten heal from last week's shocking attack in Bridge River, First Nations leaders were quick to point a finger at outgoing Prime Minister Stephen Harper for continually ignoring the needs of Aboriginal and indigenous peoples over the past decade.

"I think the incident in Bridge River underscores the fact that there's an overwhelming need for dramatic change in this country in terms of Aboriginal people," said Stewart Phillip, president of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, who said continued underfunding has left aboriginal communities unable to combat severe poverty — and all the social and cultural ills that go with it.

"After the Conservatives took power 10 years ago, the first thing they did was reject the funding commitment made by outgoing Prime Minister Paul Martin — often referred to

as The Kelowna Accord — of \$5.1 billion in desperately needed new funding investments in the areas of health, education, housing and economic development," said Phillip. "It's a well established fact that the Harper government's relationship with Aboriginal people in this country for the last 10-year period has been very adversarial and outright hostile."

The Grand Chief is hopeful that a change in leadership in Ottawa, combined with the eye-opening findings in this summer's Truth and Reconciliation Report, will usher in a new era for Canada's indigenous peoples.

"I think the greatest progress we've made has been the release of the Truth and Reconciliation report, where Justice (Murray) Sinclair described the residential school program as 'cultural genocide,'" said Phillip. "The 94 recommendations that came out of the report are incredibly important for governments to begin implementing, but my point is it's raised Canadians' awareness that there is a very shady and shameful dimension to Canadian history.

"Given the TRC report and everything that it represents, I have some optimism with the outcome of this election that we will be able to move forward in this country and begin to take ownership of these issues."

Neither Squamish Nation Chief Ian Campbell nor Lil'wat Nation Chief Dean Nelson could be reached by deadline.

Direct Link: <http://www.piquenewsmagazine.com/whistler/attack-underscores-dire-need-to-support-first-nations-chief/Content?oid=2675290>

Aboriginal Crime, Justice & Law Enforcement

Young man who died after B.C. attack was overwhelmed, couldn't pay rent: chief

The Canadian Press
October 16, 2015 11:20 AM



Investigators enter the Bridge River Indian Band office where one man died and nine others were injured following an attack, near Lillooet, B.C., on Wednesday October 14, 2015. A 22-year-old man who went on a rampage and injured 11 people at the office of a British Columbia First Nation lashed out when life became too overwhelming, the band's chief says. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Darryl Dyck

VICTORIA - A 22-year-old man who went on a rampage and injured 11 people at the office of a British Columbia First Nation lashed out when life became too overwhelming, the band's chief says.

Bridge River Indian Band Chief Susan James said band staff were working with the young man to try and find stable housing and a way to pay his rent.

He walked into the band office Wednesday morning and went around attacking people with a weapon. Two of the victims remain in critical condition and two others suffered serious injuries.

On Friday, the BC Coroners Service identified the man as David James, a member of the Bridge River Indian Band, also known as (Xwisten), located near Lillooet in the province's Interior.

James was not related to Chief James.

"He had complex social and health needs that our staff did not have the resources or training to adequately respond to," the chief said in a news release.

James died Wednesday morning inside the band office. Police said that when officers arrived, he was already restrained and had stopped breathing. They attempted CPR, but he could not be revived.

Investigations are underway by the RCMP, the coroner and the Independent Investigations Office, which looks into police-involved deaths and serious injuries.

Leaders of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, First Nations Summit and the B.C. Assembly of First Nations issued a joint news release Friday, offering sympathies to the families of those injured in the attack.

Assembly of First Nations regional Chief Shane Gottfriedson said the intergenerational trauma from residential schools is a significant and contributing factor in the tragedy.

"We, as First Nations, continue to face unbearable social conditions which directly impact community safety. We are the poorest of the poor and the most disadvantaged," he said in the release.

First Nations Summit Grand Chief Ed John said the attack is a wake-up call that has exposed the fragile state of the social safety net for many First Nations.

Poverty, unemployment and mental health troubles are some of the long-standing issues that band members face, James said in an interview.

She said staff at First Nations administration offices are often tasked with implementing government-funded assistance programs that leave people feeling short-changed and blaming the office workers.

"The staff have to deal with forcing members to live under what was being imposed upon them (by government)," she said of social assistance programs. "These people work hard and they are committed to their jobs, and they are doing it not for the salary, which is poor, but because they believe in their community."

- See more at: <http://www.princegeorgecitizen.com/young-man-who-died-after-b-c-attack-was-overwhelmed-couldn-t-pay-rent-chief-1.2087807#sthash.aMNcRHkD.dpuf>

Esquimalt First Nations Chief and his wife charged with animal cruelty

By [Amy Judd](#) Online News Producer Global News

Esquimalt First Nations Chief Andrew Thomas and his wife, Mary Anne, have both been charged with animal cruelty after allegedly failing to provide necessary veterinary care for their Shih tzu, Chewy.

The BC SPCA says the pair was charged with causing unnecessary pain, suffering or injury to an animal and neglecting or failing to provide necessities.

On July 22, the BC SPCA responded to a call about a sick dog tethered outside a home. However, officers were not able to make contact with the owners.

The next day, someone brought Chewy to the vet. Even though the BC SPCA says his injuries were treatable, the owners chose to have him euthanized.

“Chewy was badly matted, filthy and was suffering from a severe infection in his eye that had been left untreated. The infected eyeball had ruptured, causing an open weeping down his face,” said BC SPCA senior animal protection officer Erika Paul. “The vet suspected that, given the severity of the infection, the injury had gone untreated for a number of weeks.”

If convicted, Andrew and Mary Anne could face a maximum jail sentence of five years, a maximum fine of \$10,000 and a ban on owning animals **that could last a lifetime**.

They are currently not allowed to possess animals and are scheduled to make their first court appearance on Oct. 22.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2279911/esquimalt-first-nations-chief-and-his-wife-charged-with-animal-cruelty/>

Saskatchewan RCMP officer, assault suspect exchange fire on Red Earth Cree Nation

The StarPhoenix October 19, 2015



An external investigation was requested after an RCMP officer discharged a weapon in response to a suspect shooting at a police vehicle on Red Earth Cree Nation on Oct. 17, 2015

An external investigation is underway after an RCMP officer discharged a weapon in response to a suspect shooting at a police vehicle on a Saskatchewan First Nation.

The shooting incident took place Saturday around 9:55 p.m., shortly after two members of the Carrot River detachment responded to an assault complaint on the Red Earth Cree Nation.

The investigation led officers to a second residence on the reserve, where they found the suspect outside with a long-barrelled gun. According to RCMP in a news release, the man shot at the police vehicle, at which point an officer returned fire. The suspect – a 24-year-old man from Red Earth who police say was known to the assault victim at the first

residence – fled the scene on foot but was located and arrested without incident around 10:25 p.m. The man was taken to Saskatoon hospital for treatment of what was believed to be a gunshot wound.

Red Earth Cree Nation is located approximately 225 kilometres northeast of Prince Albert.

RCMP on Sunday asked the Saskatoon Police Service to conduct an independent external investigation into the incident. The SPS will report its result to the Ministry of Justice and the attorney general. The RCMP also asked that an independent observer be appointed.

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/news/saskatchewan+rcmp+officer+assault+suspect+exchange+fire+earth+cree+nation/11449801/story.html>

First Nations student deaths inquest hears stories of racism

Inquest hears testimony about eggs and bottles being thrown at youth

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 19, 2015 12:03 PM ET Last Updated: Oct 19, 2015 12:03 PM ET



Two friends of Paul Panacheese, a 21-year-old student who died in Thunder Bay, shared stories about racism at the second week of the student deaths inquest. (CBC)

The inquest into First Nations student deaths in Thunder Bay is shedding light on the grim realities facing some young people because of their race.

In the second week of the inquest, which is learning about the experiences of seven First Nations students who died while attending school in Thunder Bay, several people came forward to share stories. Among those who provided testimony were two friends of Paul Panacheese, a 21-year-old who died in 2006.

Betty Kennedy, the supervisor of the northern office of the provincial advocate for children and youth, says all of the testimony she heard highlighted racism in the city.

"Paul's friends identified very specifically," Kennedy said. "Eggs being thrown at them, or bottles, and [being] called names because of their race."

A boarding home parent, a student support worker and a nurse also spoke about disturbing circumstances experienced by First Nations youth, said Kennedy.

"It was very difficult to hear the pain of what life was for these kids coming in for school. And to be away from their own family and support system," Kennedy said.

Testimony from the First Nations student deaths inquest is not being heard this week, but is set to resume on Oct. 27. That's when they'll listen to testimony regarding the death of 18-year-old Robyn Harper.

The seven students who died ranged in age from 15 to 21 years of age, and came from various northern Ontario communities to Thunder Bay in order to attend school. The inquest aims to learn from past experiences in order to prevent more deaths from happening.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/first-nations-student-death-inquest-1.3277769>

Youth council to advise inquest jury

Posted: Monday, October 19, 2015 6:00 am | *Updated: 6:01 am, Mon Oct 19, 2015.*

The Chronicle-Journal

The Ontario First Nations Young People's Council, a regional advocacy body representing First Nations youth across Ontario, is playing a role at the ongoing inquest into the deaths of seven students in Thunder Bay.

The youth council is directly involved with the inquest at the Thunder Bay Courthouse and will be making recommendations to the inquest jury panel next year.

"It's unfortunate that in today's society our young people cannot even leave their communities to improve their education without the fear and lack of trust they feel walking the streets or going to school," Megan Logan, OFNYPC member representing the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians youth, said Wednesday in a news release.

"Council believes we all need to work together to create solutions towards community safety and the elimination of race-based discrimination in large urban centres," she said.

OFNYPC member Michael Moore, from the Grand Council Treaty 3 area, added that, “while race-based targeting is very much present, social and health detriments are also a cause for many hurdles Indigenous people face on Turtle Island.”

Moore stressed the importance of involving the youth council in the inquest, stating that “as a delegation of representatives working for the betterment of communities in our nations, the OFNYPC can help identify the realities many of our brothers and sisters face day to day.”

The inquest, which began on Oct. 5, is looking into the deaths of seven First Nations youth: Reggie Bushie, Jethro Anderson, Jordan Wabasse, Curran Strang, Paul Panacheese, Robyn Harper and Kyle Morrisseau, all from remote communities across Northern Ontario, who lost their lives while attending high school in Thunder Bay. The inquest is expected to last until March 2016 and hear from up to 200 witnesses.

The OFNYPC says it will provide the jury members with youth input and feedback on how they can achieve significant, workable solutions.

Direct Link: http://www.chroniclejournal.com/news/local/youth-council-to-advise-inquest-jury/article_611542a8-7619-11e5-ac40-af065d5fe366.html

Aboriginal Education & Youth

Number of Alberta aboriginal children in government care to be reduced: minister



Kathleen Ganley is sworn in as the Alberta Minister of Justice and Aboriginal Affairs in Edmonton on Sunday, May 24, 2015. (THE CANADIAN PRESS/Jason Franson)

Bill Graveland, The Canadian Press
Published Friday, October 16, 2015 2:18PM EDT
Last Updated Friday, October 16, 2015 5:34PM EDT

CALGARY -- Alberta's justice minister says she would like to see changes made next year that would reduce the number of aboriginal children in care.

Kathleen Ganley says consultations are underway with First Nations about the disproportionate number of aboriginal children in government care.

"They are definitely over-represented and ... as we enter ... general engagement with First Nations and Metis communities, we will be discussing possible alternative solutions to that situation," Ganley told The Canadian Press on Friday.

"I don't actually have the statistics in front of me, but as I understand it, there are more children in care now than there were at the end of the residential schools."

The last residential school in Alberta closed in 1975.

There were more than 6,900 children in care in Alberta as of June of this year. Some 69 per cent were from First Nations communities.

Ganley expects a report and recommendations to be ready in February. She said many experts think that more of an effort should be made to keep children at home when possible, because removing them can be "traumatic for everyone."

"It's better to intervene earlier and support families, so they can support children rather than taking children out of the communities, because certainly the perception of that is very much like residential schools," Ganley said.

Charles Weaselhead, grand chief of the Treaty 7 First Nations, said they have been calling on the provincial government for years to bring the matter to the table. He welcomes a long-term strategy.

"The statistics speak for themselves. How are we going to get out of this situation where the numbers are outrageous? There's far too many aboriginal children in care compared to the mainstream population," Weaselhead said following a meeting with Premier Rachel Notley.

Weaselhead agrees that the best outcome for families is to have children remain in their homes when possible.

But he added problems didn't just pop up overnight.

"Having that many numbers and looking at our situation on reserves with regards to capacity and financial support, it begins to break down the success factor. This whole thing wasn't developed overnight and the solutions are not going to happen overnight.

"There is no quick fix."

Direct Link: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/number-of-alberta-aboriginal-children-in-government-care-to-be-reduced-minister-1.2613469>

Too many aboriginal kids in government care

By Bill Graveland The Canadian Press, October 16, 2015 3:02 pm



Alberta's justice minister wants to reduce the number of aboriginal children in government care.

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Ganley said she expects recommendations from the consultations to be submitted in February. She said many experts think that more of an effort should be made to keep children at home when possible, because removing them can be "traumatic for everyone."

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“There is no quick fix.”

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2281442/too-many-aboriginal-kids-in-government-care/>

Higher thinking for aboriginal education

By [Craig and Marc Kielburger](#)

Saturday, October 17, 2015 12:00:00 EDT AM



First Nations competitors from Rainbow Canoe Club in Kulleet Bay race to the line in the first aboriginal war canoe race in over 100 years in the Inner Harbour of Victoria June 27, 2015. (REUTERS/Kevin Light)

Canada's Saanich First Nation people have a word for success gained after much struggle: le, nonet (pronounced le-non-git) means "paddling a canoe in a storm and making it to the other side." For many Canadian aboriginal youth, a college certificate or university degree is still an unreachable shore.

Slightly less than half (48.4 per cent) of aboriginal people in Canada, ages 25 to 64, have a post-secondary certificate or degree, according to the 2011 census, compared to 64.7 per cent of non-aboriginal Canadians.

A visit to the University of Victoria got us thinking about how to remove obstacles to post-secondary education for aboriginal youth.

With so many aboriginal people living in poverty, tuition cost is an even greater challenge than for non-aboriginal students. The Assembly of First Nations says, even with federal government support, most bands don't have the finances to assist all their students in need.

UVictoria offers bursaries for aboriginal students and an innovative University of Winnipeg program rewards local aboriginal high school students for their academic achievements and community service with credits toward tuition.

But scholarships are only part of the solution. The lingering inter-generational trauma of residential schools has left many aboriginal people leery of education. It's difficult for youth to envision a future for themselves that includes college or university, says Ruth Young, director of the UVictoria's Office of Indigenous Affairs.

That's why Canada needs to invest resources earlier on.

We were fascinated by the range of non-scholarship aboriginal support services offered by UVictoria and others. Campus Cousins, for example, helps aboriginal youth in primary and secondary school examine their life goals to see if a post-secondary education is a good fit. UVictoria also runs a week-long summer camp for youth in grades eight to 12 to encourage them to consider post-secondary education.

Challenges remain when aboriginal students get to college or university. Imagine living your whole life on a remote reserve and suddenly finding yourself on a teeming campus where your culture is not represented in the faces around you, or the course material you study.

Culture shock contributes to higher dropout rates among aboriginal students.

Good examples include Ryerson University's aboriginal peer support program, and UVictoria's and Nipissing University's aboriginal mentoring programs, counselling services, and cultural centres. Both of the latter recruit First Nations elders for staff and faculty. Young says some departments at UVictoria are removing Eurocentric biases from curriculum to better reflect aboriginal history and culture.

UVictoria's programs have led to a 20 per cent increase in the graduation rate of aboriginal students and a 67 per cent reduction in dropout rates, according to a study by the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation.

We see an opportunity for the Canadian government to bring colleges and universities together and encourage them to develop aboriginal student support programs on more campuses. Aboriginal students deserve to have as many choices for welcoming institutions within a reasonable distance, with programs that interest them, as non-aboriginal students.

We hear from aboriginal leaders that education is key to overcoming the challenges facing Canada's indigenous peoples. And while the focus must remain on equal access to quality primary and secondary education, we can't ignore post-secondary.

Higher education transforms aboriginal youth into role models and contributors to their communities, inspiring the youth who follow them to achieve their own "le, nonet."

Craig and Marc Kielburger founded a platform for social change that includes Free The Children, Me to We, and the youth empowerment movement, We Day. Visit we.org for more information.

Direct Link: <http://www.thewhig.com/2015/10/16/higher-thinking-for-aboriginal-education>

First Nations children in government care to be reduced in Alberta

About 69 per cent of children in care are from First Nations communities

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 16, 2015 6:15 PM MT Last Updated: Oct 16, 2015 6:15 PM MT



Premier Rachel Notley met with Treaty 7 Grand Chief Charles Weasel Head in a first meeting with the First Nations group since the NDP took power. (Jennifer Lee/CBC)

Alberta's justice minister says she wants changes made to reduce the number of aboriginal children in care.

Kathleen Ganley said consultations are underway with First Nations about the disproportionate number of aboriginal children in government care.

"They are definitely over-represented and... as we enter... general engagement with First Nations and Metis communities, we will be discussing possible alternative solutions to that situation," Ganley told The Canadian Press.



Justice Minister Kathleen Ganley. (CBC)

"I don't actually have the statistics in front of me, but as I understand it there are more children in care now than there were at the end of the residential schools."

The last residential school in Alberta closed in 1975.

There were more than 6,900 children in care in Alberta as of June of this year. About 69 per cent were from First Nations communities.

Ganley expects a report and recommendations to be ready in February.

She said many experts think more effort is needed to keep children at home when possible, because removing them can be "traumatic for everyone."

"It's better to intervene earlier and support families, so they can support children rather than taking children out of the communities, because certainly the perception of that is very much like residential schools," Ganley said.

First meeting with Notley government

Ganley's comments came during the first meeting of Rachel Notley's NDP government with Treaty 7 chiefs. It's part of the premier's push to improve relations with Alberta's First Nations.

Treaty 7 Grand Chief and Chief of the Blood Tribe Charles Weasel Head said he's looking to work with the province on the welfare of aboriginal children.

"The statistics speak for themselves. How are we going to get out of this situation where the numbers are outrageous? There's far too many aboriginal children in care compared to the mainstream population," Weasel Head said following a meeting with Notley.

Weasel Head says Treaty 7 chiefs talked to the premier about her commitment to implement the principles of United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, but he's not clear how that will happen.

He said they have been calling on the provincial government to bring the matter to the table for years and he welcomes a long-term strategy.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/first-nations-children-in-government-care-to-be-reduced-in-alberta-1.3275930>

Education gap between aboriginal, non-aboriginal students unacceptable, says Alberta premier

[Trevor Howell, Calgary Herald](#)

Published on: October 16, 2015 | Last Updated: October 16, 2015 6:14 PM MDT



Premier Rachel Notley and Grand Chief Charles Weaselhead talk to media following a meeting at the McDougall Centre in Calgary on Friday, Oct. 15, 2015. Gavin Young / Calgary Herald

Premier Rachel Notley met Friday with Treaty 7 chiefs in Calgary to discuss ways the province could foster economic opportunities and improve education outcomes for Alberta's First Nations communities.

Notley said the meeting at Calgary's McDougall Centre was to renew and refocus the provincial government's relationship with First Nations.

"We talked about moving forward on a protocol agreement that could lay out a framework for more productive discussions and conversations that can hopefully lead to some genuine change ... in the quality of life of so many First Nations people who are in Alberta."

The NDP campaigned last election to build the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into provincial law and repeal the Aboriginal Consultation Levy Act, which collects fees from companies that plan to develop on Crown land.

Charles Weaselhead, chief of the Blood Tribe and Treaty 7 grand chief, welcomed the opportunity to sit down with the premier to set a new course between the two levels of government.

"There are some challenges we expect along the way," Weaselhead told reporters.

"What's important right now is that there is a willingness ... to work together so that we can begin to bring a little higher quality of life to our First Nations people in the respective Treaty 6, 7 and 8 areas."



Premier Rachel Notley and Grand Chief Charles Weaselhead talk to media following a meeting at the McDougall Centre in Calgary on Friday, Oct. 15, 2015. Gavin Young / Calgary Herald

Earlier this week, Weaselhead said education for First Nations, which is a federal responsibility, remains a major issue.

The province estimates that funding for education on First Nations is, per child, around 80 per cent of the level off-reserve.

Alberta has struggled to close the education achievement gap, such as high school graduation rates, between aboriginal and non-aboriginal students.

Only 43.6 per cent of Alberta First Nations, Metis and Inuit students graduate high school in three years. The dropout rate hovers around 7.8 per cent.

Provincial targets for high school completion by First Nations, Metis and Inuit students is set at 51 per cent for the 2015-16 school year, rising to 53 per cent by 2019-20.

Notley said the province would work collaboratively with chiefs and the federal government to improve education outcomes.

“We cannot carry on with this disparity between First Nations people and everyone else who is off reserve,” she said.

“We need to listen to the chiefs about what we can do,” Notley added. “I’m looking forward to considering the proposals that they bring forward.”

Direct Link: <http://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/education-gap-between-aboriginal-non-aboriginal-students-unacceptable-says-alberta-premier>

Global Voices: UVic tries to help aboriginals feel at home

Marc and Craig Kielburger / .
October 18, 2015 04:37 AM



NDP Leader Tom Mulcair signs a poster in Edmonton encouraging First Nations people to vote.
Photograph By Ryan Remiorz, The Canadian Press

The Saanich First Nation people have a word for success gained after much struggle: le, nonet (pronounced le-non-git). It means “paddling a canoe in a storm and making it through to the other side.” For many Canadian aboriginal youth, a college certificate or university degree is still an unreachable shore.

Slightly less than half (48.4 per cent) of all aboriginal people in Canada, age 25 to 64, have a post-secondary certificate or degree, according to the 2011 Census of Canada. That's compared with 64.7 per cent of non-aboriginal Canadians.

Throughout this election we have been talking about issues that matter to young Canadians. A recent visit to the University of Victoria got us thinking about how to remove the obstacles to post-secondary education for First Nations, Metis and Inuit youth.

With so many aboriginal people living in poverty, tuition cost is an even greater challenge than for non-aboriginal students. The Assembly of First Nations says that, even with federal government support, most bands don't have the finances to assist all their students in need.

UVic offers tuition bursaries for aboriginal students, and an innovative University of Winnipeg program rewards local aboriginal high school students for their academic achievements and community service with credits towards their eventual tuition.

But scholarships are only half of the solution. The lingering inter-generational trauma of residential schools has left many leery of education. It's difficult for aboriginal youth to envision a future for themselves that includes college or university, according to Ruth Young, director of the UVic's Office of Indigenous Affairs.

That's why Canada needs to invest resources earlier on. We were fascinated by the range of non-scholarship aboriginal support services offered by UVic and others. The university's Campus Cousins outreach program, for example, helps aboriginal youth in primary and secondary school examine their life goals to see if a post-secondary education is a good fit for them. UVic also runs a week-long "mini university" summer camp for youth in grades eight to 12 to encourage them to consider post-secondary education.

Challenges remain when aboriginal students get to college or university. Imagine what it must feel like when you've lived your whole life on a remote reserve, suddenly finding yourself on a teeming campus where your culture is not represented in the faces around you, or the course material you study.

Culture shock contributes to higher dropout rates among aboriginal students. So schools must also create welcoming and supportive campus and course environments.

Good examples include Ryerson University's aboriginal peer support program, and UVic's and Nipissing University's aboriginal-mentoring programs, counselling services, and aboriginal cultural centres. Both of the latter universities have also recruited First Nations elders on their staff and faculty. Young says some departments at UVic are removing Eurocentric biases from curriculum to better reflect aboriginal history and culture. Ryerson, in Toronto, runs an aboriginal peer support program.

Research appears to back the effectiveness of these initiatives. UVic's aboriginal support programs have led to a 20 per cent increase in the graduation rate of aboriginal students and a 67 per cent reduction in dropout rates, according to a study by the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation.

But what we notice is that all these efforts are largely scattershot. Young agrees that colleges and universities should collaborate and learn from one another.

We see an opportunity for the Canadian government to bring colleges and universities together and encourage them to develop aboriginal student support programs on more campuses. Aboriginal students deserve to have as many choices for welcoming institutions within a reasonable distance, with programs that interest them, as non-aboriginal students do.

Time and again we hear from aboriginal leaders that education is key to overcoming myriad and complex challenges facing Canada's indigenous peoples. While the focus must remain on equal access to quality primary and secondary education, we can't ignore post-secondary.

Higher education transforms aboriginal youth into role models and contributors to their communities, inspiring the youth who follow them to achieve their own "le, nonet."

Brothers Craig and Marc Kielburger founded a platform for social change that includes the international charity Free The Children, the social enterprise Me to We and the youth empowerment movement We Day. Visit we.org for more information.

- See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/life/global-voices-uvic-tries-to-help-aboriginals-feel-at-home-1.2088728#sthash.MvIVH0fT.dpuf>

Aboriginal perspectives help shape new B.C. school curriculum



Author Nicola Campbell reads from her book *Shi-shi-etko*, a resource being used at the Grade 5 level.

By Tracy Sherlock, Vancouver Sun August 29, 2015

With the new curriculum comes one notable and significant shift: There is a new focus on aboriginal learning.

Not only will students in B.C. be learning about the history of residential schools, starting in Grade 5, but they will also have aboriginal perspectives embedded into all parts of the curriculum in what the government hopes will be a meaningful and authentic manner.

Some have questioned why B.C. schools would focus on aboriginal culture and not that of other ethnic groups.

“The knowledge, the literature and the language from where other people in the province have come from still exists, still grows and still flourishes in other parts of the world,” said Jo-Anne Chrona, curriculum co-ordinator for the First Nations Education Steering Committee. “This is the only place in the world that holds this knowledge. ... If it’s not taught and learned here, it will not be taught anywhere else.”

In the specific lessons about B.C.’s history, topics will include discrimination, inequality, oppression and the impacts of colonialism. The changes are part of the B.C. government’s response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s report on the residential school system.

The aboriginal perspectives embedded into the rest of the curriculum are based on the First Peoples Principles of Learning, which include ideas like “Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one’s actions,” and “Learning requires exploration of one’s identity.”

These principles were first written down and articulated by a group of aboriginal advisers and educators in 2006 when they were creating a new English 12 course based on First Nations, Chrona said.

All of the First Peoples Principles of Learning were considered by the teams creating the new curriculum, and each team had aboriginal representation, according to the ministry of education. One professional development day this school year will focus on aboriginal education, Chrona said.

It might be difficult to imagine how math, for example, could have learning about First Nations embedded into its curriculum. But Chrona says building a canoe is a good example of how to think about it.

“In math, we advocate for ... connecting it to the world around you,” Chrona said. “Math ability has always been important for First Peoples. There are some fantastic resources out of Haida Gwaii that show how math was embedded in the creation of a canoe. ... (There are) these amazing artisans that create these things ... like someone who could take a piece of material and create a miniature, scale model of what the canoe would look like later.”

And while it might not be such a stretch to imagine integrating First Nations literature into the English curriculum, Coquitlam teacher Tara Elie said some teachers are concerned about how to find authentic aboriginal material to use in their classrooms.

Chrona said the First Nations Education Steering Committee will have full resource guides available for teachers for both the specific units on residential schools and across other curricular areas. The guides are available on the committee's website and include annotated lists of reading materials and other resources.

"I've been in education for 18 years. ... I'm feeling and seeing something different now. I'm seeing so much more receptivity and excitement about the integration of First Peoples' content and people recognizing that this is an important part of who we are as a country. And that's exciting. It didn't exist 10 years ago for sure, and I didn't see it here five years ago either."

Direct Link:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/touch/news/metro/Aboriginal+perspectives+help+shape+school+curriculum/11325550/story.html?rel=11325548>

Researcher explores post-secondary options for Nunavik students

"They take courses in programs that are not exclusive to Inuit"

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, October 20, 2015 - 1:00 pm



College students Minnie Molly Snowball and her sister Saladie Snowball, from Kangiqsualujjuaq, are pictured here at the campus of John Abbott College near Montreal. That's the likely home of a new post-secondary program being developed for Nunavimmiut students. (FILE PHOTO)

A newly-awarded federal research grant will help a Quebec researcher look at post-secondary education and how it can be better designed for Nunavik Inuit.

Mylène Jubinville, a masters student at the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue (UQAT), was recently awarded a \$17,500 grant from a federal research council.

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council funding will allow Jubinville to look at how post-secondary programs have been tailored to Inuit in other regions in Canada and throughout the world.

The goal is to highlight practices that could be implemented for Nunavik students.

“In terms of post-secondary education, Nunavut Inuit have Nunavut Sivuniksavut, Quebec’s First Nations have Kiuna, but the Nunavik Inuit have no post-secondary institution of their own,” Jubinville said in an Oct. 5 UQAT release.

“Those who want to pursue post-secondary studies have to go to Montreal, where they can study in French or English in programs run by the Kativik School Board.”

Every year, roughly 100 Nunavik students move to Montreal to pursue post-secondary programs at institutions, the majority of them at John Abbott College and Cégep Marie-Victorin.

“However, they take courses in programs that are not exclusive to Inuit,” Jubinville said.

To bridge that gap, the KSB plans to establish [a Montreal-based program modeled after Nunavut Sivuniksavut](#), which would cater to Nunavik students.

The program could now take off in Montreal as soon as August 2016, the school board has said.

School board officials are still working out details on where the program would be based, but have been in discussion with John Abbott college in Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, where KSB’s administrative offices are already based.

Jubinville’s project, called Nunavik Inuit at school, from 1939 to 2015, hopes to gather a better understanding of the region’s past education experiences.

Then she’ll look at different programs offered to Inuit in Greenland, Alaska, Norway and elsewhere in Canada.

Finally, Jubinville will meet with Nunavimmiut post-secondary students in Montreal to hear their own perceptions on education.

“Do they prefer to move south or stay in the North?” Jubinville said. “This is one question that has not been directly put to them until now.”

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674researcher_explores_post-secondary_options_for_nunavik_students/

Educating teachers in Native cultural practices

By [Celina Ip](#)

Monday, October 19, 2015 2:19:03 MDT PM



Deborah Lloyd “Buffalo Woman” (left) with First Nations, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) program coordinator Val Hanson pose together after the presentation at Assumption Jr/Sr High School.

On October 16, Deborah Lloyd “Buffalo Women” gave teachers the tools to better understand and explore Native Cultural practices in the classroom.

Lloyd is a member of the Alberta Teacher’s Association (ATA) Instructor’s Core and for several years she has been teaching Alberta teachers in First Nations, Métis and Inuit education from grades K to 12.

The ATA organized Lloyd’s “Understanding Cultures and History” workshop which welcomed staff from Assumption Jr./Sr. High School, Notre Dame High School and Holy Family Catholic School.

Lloyd facilitated discussions and interactive activities to educate the participants on Native Cultural practices that can be incorporated in the classroom so as to better connect to those students.

“It’s about understanding cultures and histories of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people. We need to connect with all students,” said Lloyd. “And I think it’s really important that we have strategies to connect with aboriginal students and serve them better and I think this workshop addresses that.”

Lloyd stressed that the teachers incorporate Native cultural oral traditions to augment the learning of the Aboriginal students.

“Our people learned from the teachings of our elders and it’s not just a learned practice it’s an inherent nature of our people to use that respect methodology of understanding,” said Lloyd.

Lloyd suggested that the teachers invite an elder to speak to the students.

“Instead of showing a movie about aboriginal people and trying to teach them about aboriginal people only by watching a movie, you want to make sure that you’re bringing in an elder as well,” said Lloyd. “The way that you understand people is by communicating with them and communication doesn’t occur necessarily through reading or watching a movie or whatever, it comes from connecting with your fellow man.”

Lloyd also engaged the participants in activities incorporating the Medicine Wheel philosophies and encouraged teachers to use it in the classroom with their students.

“The Medicine Wheel is that circular thought process that we use to process information. Teachers can use it as a strategy for a math problem, a scientific problem or anything,” said Lloyd. “So you put them in a group of four and they sit knee-to-knee in the four directions and then they process information in the circle around the four directions. The four directions are static and they move around the circle the way of the sun.”

According to Lloyd, the participants were all engaged with the presentation and followed up with great feedback and questions.

“They were asking questions about supplementary ideas. So if this happens then how does that happen? And what’s the history of the Métis, how did the Métis name come into being? What happened, once the residential school systems were closed and how did the people reconcile with some of that? And the answer of course is that we’re still in that process and it’s going to be a long, tedious process,” said Lloyd.

“But this is a start by educating our educators on how to handle these situations and how to use the methodologies that are going to enhance the learning process for the aboriginal students.”

Direct Link: <http://www.coldlakesun.com/2015/10/19/educating-teachers-in-native-cultural-practices>

Changes being made after report on death of Aboriginal teen: B.C. Children's Ministry

The Canadian Press October 19, 2015



A sequence of photos of Paige as a baby, as a child and as a teenager. — Representative for Children and Youth.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

VANCOUVER — British Columbia's Children's Ministry says it has taken steps to help front-line workers understand their roles and responsibilities in the wake of a scathing report on the short, tragic life of a young aboriginal woman.

The change was among a handful announced Monday by the ministry and follows a May report by children and youth representative Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond into the death of a 19-year-old aboriginal woman identified only as Paige.

Paige died of an overdose in a washroom on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside in 2013.

Turpel-Lafond said in her report that Paige endured a "broken system" characterized by persistent indifference from front-line government workers.

Children's Minister Stephanie Cadieux said in a news release her ministry has created a policy map to help front-line workers understand their roles and responsibilities and revised policy around death reviews for children and youth who are or have been under the ministry's care.

She said officials have also created an awareness campaign reminding service providers that they must report any at-risk children or youth to the ministry — something Turpel-Lafond said did not happen in Paige's case.

Cadieux noted that these changes are only the beginning and there is a lot of work to be done to help B.C.'s at-risk children and youth.

“We also recognize that real and meaningful change on a systemic scale will be an ongoing process,” she said. “To be successful, we need to examine — from the ground up — the way this province supports our most vulnerable young people.”

The news release included changes that have already been announced by the ministry too, such as the creation of a rapid-response team to help at-risk youth on the Downtown Eastside.

Turpel-Lafond made six recommendations in her report, including a call for the ministry to immediately address the “persistent professional indifference” of police, social workers and educators towards aboriginal youth.

“I am buoyed to see that (the ministry) and government have begun to grapple with these important issues and that progress will be improved outcomes for these youth,” said Turpel-Lafond in the news release.

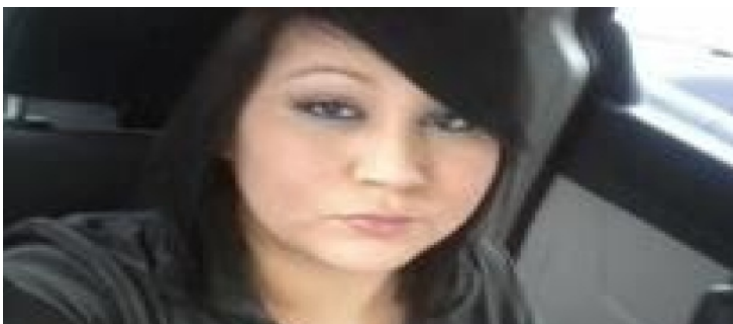
Direct Link:

<http://www.theprovince.com/news/Changes+being+made+after+report+death+Aboriginal+teen+Children+Ministry/11450513/story.html>

Paige's story: Tragic death of aboriginal teen prompts response from B.C. government

B.C. government releases action plan five months after scathing report condemns ministry's handling of teen

By On The Coast, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 19, 2015 4:48 PM PT Last Updated: Oct 20, 2015 8:39 AM PT



Paige, 19, died of a drug overdose after a troubled life on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. (B.C. Children's Representative)

After five months, the B.C. government released its response to the Representative for Children and Youth's [damning report into the death of a girl in ministry care named Paige](#).

Paige, 19, died of a drug overdose after a troubled life on Vancouver's the Downtown Eastside. Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond's report blamed the B.C. government's "brutal and cruel approach" for her death.

The government's commitments, released on Monday — as British Columbians were focussed on the election — include a "rapid response team" that will "allow service providers to reach out and directly address the needs and safety of the highest-risk youth in the Downtown Eastside."

The province has also undertaken a review of all young people living on the Downtown Eastside involved with the Ministry for Children and Family Development, and an awareness campaign for service providers that will remind them of their duty to report to MCFD whenever a child or youth may be at risk of harm.

"The Paige report talks about systemic issues in the Downtown Eastside, which is why a fulsome response requires engagement from partners across the health, education, justice, aboriginal and child and family-serving service sectors," said Stephanie Cadieux, Minister of Children and Family Development, in a statement.



Stephanie Cadieux says that reform at the Ministry of Children and Family Development is an "ongoing" process. (CBC)

"There is a collective responsibility that needs to be reinvigorated, and the first and most important step is to bring together decision-makers who can collaborate to create solutions that might not yet exist within our system. That's part of what we are doing with our rapid response team."

Cadieux said meaningful change at the ministry is an "ongoing" process, and that she was "buoyed" that progress is being made toward that change.

According to a press release, the government is also committing to interview ministry staff about high-risk youth, clarify policies for frontline social workers and conduct several reviews of policy in B.C. and beyond.

It has also undertaken to allow case reviews in the death of any youth who was formerly in care up to the age of 20, even though young people officially leave the care system at age 19.

The government will also allow case reviews for any child or youth fatality that occurs while the young person is in the care of the director of children and families.

Representative for children and youth responds

The representative for children and youth, Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, who wrote the original Paige report, gave her thoughts on the government's proposed actions during an interview with On The Coast.

"I'm very pleased that they've put out a written plan ... this has been the subject of a lot of discussion behind the scenes and a lot of advocacy and pushing from my office to get issues addressed that weren't, maybe, at the highest priority," she said.

"Their report today, on the actions they have taken and will take actually go some distance towards satisfying me that this issue is being taken far more seriously than it was before the report into the tragic life of Paige was issued."

Turpel-Lafond says reporting on children in dangerous situations has already improved and she's glad to see that the B.C. government is more open to the idea of secure in-patient care for children whose health is in crisis and are in need of intervention.

When it comes to addressing what Turpel-Lafond called a culture of "persistent professional indifference" towards aboriginal people and youth at the Ministry, she says today's response is a good first step, but "the proof is in the pudding," and depends on future outcomes for those youth.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/paige-report-government-responds-1.3278779>

Indigenous educators optimistic, but skeptical of Trudeau's promises

'My faith is completely resting in the resilience of our communities,' Tasha Spillett says



Prime minister-designate Justin Trudeau speaks at the National Press Theatre during a press conference in Ottawa on Tuesday, October 20, 2015. (Sean Kilpatrick/The Canadian Press)

Indigenous leaders in Manitoba are cautiously optimistic about the new Liberal majority government and whether the record number of newly elected indigenous members of Parliament can bring about change for First Nations.

"I think healthy optimism is good ... but I am a little skeptical of promises," said Niigaan Sinclair, a professor and acting head of the department of native studies at the University of Manitoba.

'The real fundamental issue is to break down the controlling and assimilative parts within Canada's constitution.' - *Niigaan Sinclair*

Sinclair said his skepticism is based on a series of Liberal government-backed policies over the years that are now considered regressive. Specifically, he referenced the funding cap on First Nations education spending, the introduction of the white paper in the '60s — which would have abolished the Indian Act and put an end to Indian status for First Nations people — as well as the First Nations Governance Act, "sort of a new Indian Act that was draconian and controlling."

"I also appreciate the new dialogue that Trudeau is adopting, the nation-to-nation relationship. That's a pretty new trend amongst the Liberal party," said Sinclair, adding he doesn't think those plans will be easily executed based on how things are currently structured.

"I think the nation-to-nation relationship is virtually impossible in the current structure of the Canadian government because the way in which we are treated is as children; we're wards of the state."

8 indigenous MPs



Indigenous educator Tasha Spillett (left) and University of Manitoba professor Niigaan Sinclair (right) joined CBC host Marcy Markusa on CBC's Information Radio Wednesday morning. (CBC)

Of the 18 indigenous candidates the Liberals ran, eight won seats. Only one, Yvonne Jones from Labrador, was an incumbent.

Indigenous educator Tasha Spillett said she is optimistic about the "new indigenous faces in Ottawa," but whether those indigenous MPs were elected to represent indigenous peoples remains to be seen.

"It's important that these people do have a responsibility to their nations back at home," said Spillett. "Not only are they participating in the settler-colonial electoral system and governance, but they also have responsibilities to their nations and keeping their own government accountable to those responsibilities."

Aboriginal affairs minister

Spillett said she isn't sure whether an indigenous aboriginal affairs minister would make a difference for First Nations.

"The position itself would be to enforce the mandate of Indian Affairs, so I am not exactly sure how big of a difference [it will make]," she said, adding she was happy to see outgoing Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt unseated.

"I know that's definitely not a job that I personally would want to do. I think it would put that person in a kind of precarious relationship with indigenous peoples."

Sinclair shares Spillett's trepidation.

"It wouldn't make a difference.... The real fundamental issue is to break down the controlling and assimilative parts within Canada's Constitution," he said, adding an indigenous minister of Indian Affairs would face an uphill battle.

"Maybe that person could manoeuvre their party in such a way that they'd be able to have such a dialogue; however, I see such monumental obstacles in the way."

'Awoke a sleeping giant'

Derek Nepinak, grand chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, said Monday that outgoing Prime Minister Stephen Harper "awoke a sleeping giant" in First Nations people this election, adding "a Liberal majority government is going to have to deal with the giant in indigenous people of these lands."

Sinclair said indigenous people involved in grassroots movements such as Idle No More are particularly engaged in the political process right now and need to be likewise engaged by the Liberal government.

"They are the new voices that Grand Chief Nepinak is talking about," he said.

Spillett said she thinks whatever happens in Ottawa going forward, indigenous people are already working within their communities across Canada to improve life for First Nations.

"We've had an outcry for a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women, but families have already been doing this work for a very long time without the intervention of systems," Spillett said.

"Going forward, my faith is completely resting in the resilience of our communities ensuring that no matter what government we work with, with that we are going to move forward for the well-being of our communities."

Sinclair remains "nervous" but he's encouraged by Trudeau's first days.

"One day in office and Trudeau's already announcing, 'I'll move speedily into the murdered and missing indigenous women national inquiry,'" he said.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/indigenous-educators-optimistic-but-skeptical-of-trudeau-s-promises-1.3281486>

U of S sees record enrolment of aboriginal students

More than 2,000 students self-declared as aboriginal

The Canadian Press Posted: Oct 21, 2015 12:50 PM CT Last Updated: Oct 21, 2015 12:50 PM CT



More than 2,000 aboriginal students are registered at the U of S. (Google Street View)

There is a record number of aboriginal students at the University of Saskatchewan.

The Saskatoon-based school says official fall enrolment numbers confirm that 2,236 students self-declared as aboriginal.

Most of those students are in arts and science, education and nursing programs.

Graeme Joseph, team leader of First Nations, Métis and Inuit student success at the university, says it's great to see that almost 11 per cent of the student population identifies as aboriginal.

Joseph says the ultimate goal for students, the university and the wider community is more aboriginal people with university degrees.

Projections released by Statistics Canada in September show that nearly one in five Saskatchewan residents will be aboriginal by 2036.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/uofs-aboriginal-student-enrolment-1.3282197>

B.C. government's response to report on Paige's death falls short, say aboriginal advocates

Action plan needs to include greater coordination amongst agencies helping vulnerable youth, says Scott Clark

By The Early Edition, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 21, 2015 12:17 PM PT Last Updated: Oct 21, 2015 12:17 PM PT



Paige, 19, died of a drug overdose after a troubled life on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. (B.C. Children's Representative)

Aboriginal youth advocates say the B.C. government still has a long way to go if it wants to prevent deaths like that of 19-year old Paige, an aboriginal girl in the ministry's care who died after a childhood spent on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

"The ministry themselves are working on a nine-to-five business model ... and there's a great deal of fear between these people and the ministry and its contractors," said Scott Clark, executive director of the Aboriginal Life in Vancouver Enhancement Society. "There's a complete lack of accountability."

Paige's story has galvanized advocates for an improved system for children in care, and highlighted many system problems.

Despite the aboriginal girl's contact with health care workers, police and social workers, many of the incidents went unreported to the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Lack of coordination

Clark said he has only read the report briefly since the provincial government released it on election day, but he already sees some major flaws.

"What's really missing from the action plan is the ongoing lack of communication amongst community organizations that work with vulnerable youth."

Clark says resources are lacking, but efforts to help aboriginal youth need to address the economic, environmental, and social factors that bring about persisting poverty in some aboriginal communities.

"We can't look at children or youth in isolation of their family, nor can we look at it in isolation of the community that they actually live in."



Scott Clark, executive director of the Aboriginal Life in Vancouver Enhancement Society, says the government's response to Paige's death falls short of what aboriginal youth need. (Charlie Cho/CBC)

The government needs to look at the bigger picture and recognize that aboriginal issues don't exist in isolation, according to Clark. Greater cooperation between various youth support groups would be a good start, he says.

"The lines of communications between the aboriginal and non-aboriginal side is very dysfunctional."

Long overdue

"There are so many systems issues, just at the local level, that go all the way up to the provincial level so this work should have been done a long time ago," said Clark, who has advocated for aboriginal youth for 25 years.

"We need a cross-ministerial, intergovernmental strategy that provides the appropriate support, like housing, daycare, child care, recreational programs," said Clark.

He points to the B.C.'s high poverty rates as proof.

"As a result of this we have greater risk for children and families," he said.

"So things are worse today than they were 10 years ago."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/b-c-government-s-response-to-report-on-paige-s-death-falls-short-say-aboriginal-advocates-1.3281927>

Record Aboriginal population at University of Saskatchewan

Published: 21 October 2015



There's a record number of Aboriginal students on campus at the University of Saskatchewan.

2,236 students have self declared as First Nations, Metis or Inuit this year, a 5.5% increase from 2014 and an all time high for the U of S.

Team leader of First Nations, Metis and Inuit student success at the university Graeme Joseph attributes the rise to academic programming, student services and a community of support. Joseph also says decades of work from the colleges of arts and science, education, nursing, and law.

Those colleges are also the most popular areas of study by Aboriginal students.

Joseph says their goal is not only to provide the students a place to learn, but to help them succeed. He says the students won't just head back to their communities, but will work across the province and take up leadership roles.

Statistics Canada projects that one in five Saskatchewan residents will be Aboriginal by 2036.

Aboriginal students now make up 10.6% of the university's population.

Direct Link: <http://www.620ckrm.com/ckrm-on-air/ckrm-local-news/13247-record-aboriginal-population-at-university-of-saskatchewan>

Aboriginal Health

First Nations community fed up with discoloured drinking water



CTV Atlantic

Published Thursday, October 15, 2015 8:13PM ADT

Residents on Potlotek First Nation in Cape Breton say they've been dealing with discoloured drinking water for more than a year, and it only seems to be getting worse.

They say it's yellow this week, and that it was brown last week, either way unfit to drink.

"I think it's horrible," says resident Savannah Johnson. "It needs to be fixed."

Johnson says her biggest concern is bathing her 14-month-old son, who has sensitive skin and the water is making him irritable.

"It really bothers me because even when he's sleeping, he's scratching away," she explains. "His forehead was all cut up one day because he was scratching so bad."

Mary Paul says she caught an infection while taking a bath in water she says is unhealthy.

"It's making us sick," she adds. "When I do soak, I wound up itching. I did go to the doctor's and now I'm taking pills."

According to the band and council on the reserve, the water is not as bad as it looks; the problem is in an aging tower and the high amount of iron in the water, when treated with chlorine, turns colour.

"It's safe because it's tested for any contaminants," explains Potlotek First Nation Chief Administrative Officer Lindsay Marshall. "What we are faced with is the turbidity. The colour is mother nature reminding us that we can't control everything."

Officials at a daycare in the area say their water turned black Thursday afternoon, forcing them to close and send the children home.

They say they'll reopen when they feel the water is safe.

"I think it's dangerous," says parent Dawn Isaac. "If it has a smell to it, that shouldn't be there."

Residents say they're concerned for their health, and hope there will be a permanent solution to the problem soon.

Marshall says there is a plan in place.

The band and council will receive half a million dollars from the federal government to help with upgrades, but he says the water plant needs to be replaced to fix the problem, which will take millions of dollars and years to complete.

With files from CTV Atlantic's Kyle Moore.

Direct Link: <http://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/first-nations-community-fed-up-with-discoloured-drinking-water-1.2612136>

Cree family to push woman in wheelchair 90 km to fundraise \$4K for scooter

Philomene Swallow Rabbitskin's 3-day journey from Mistissini to Chibougamau started Friday

By Betsy Longchap, Jaime Little, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 17, 2015 6:00 AM CT Last Updated: Oct 17, 2015 6:00 AM CT



Philomene Swallow Rabbitskin's husband Matthew, left, and son Gilbert are taking turns pushing her from Mistissini, Que., to Chibougamau. (submitted by Philomene Swallow Rabbitskin)

A woman whose diabetes led to the amputation of both her legs is spending three days travelling 90 kilometres in her wheelchair from Mistissini, Que., to Chibougamau to raise money for a new scooter.

Philomene Swallow Rabbitskin's husband Matthew and son Gilbert are taking turns pushing her from 7 a.m. until sundown each day. They started on Friday and expect to finish on Sunday.

Rabbitskin had both legs amputated because of diabetes she developed when pregnant with her first son in 1984.

"I started using the wheelchair when I had one of my legs amputated in 2001," said Rabbitskin.



The Cree Nation of Mistissini is on the southeast end of Mistassini Lake in Quebec. (Google)

"Then in 2011 my other leg was amputated due to diabetes. Since then I have been using the wheelchair and scooter to get around."

Now, she needs \$4,000 in order to buy a new scooter. Her son, Gilbert Swallow, came up with the idea of trying to raise money by walking together to Chibougamau.

Rabbitskin, who works at the local store in Mistissini and has weekly kidney dialysis treatment, says living with diabetes is a daily challenge. She encourages others to do what they can to avoid it.

"People should really listen carefully to their doctor's advice and watch what they eat."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/cree-mistissini-rabbitskin-wheelchair-1.3275844>

Rheumatic fever rates in some Ontario First Nations 75 times higher than rest of Canada

Two 4-year-olds died of the preventable disease in recent 18-month period

By Jody Porter, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 22, 2015 7:00 AM ET Last Updated: Oct 22, 2015 6:08 PM ET



Overcrowding is a serious problem on many First Nations reserves, and public health officials say it is one contributing factor to the high rates of rheumatic fever in communities north of Sioux Lookout, Ont. (Coleen Rajotte/CBC)

People living in remote First Nations north of Sioux Lookout, Ont., are experiencing acute rheumatic fever at a rate that is among the highest in the world, according to new research from the College of Family Physicians of Canada.

Researchers identified 8 cases of acute rheumatic fever among 25,000 patients in the region during a recent 18-month period ending in March 1, 2015. That marks an incidence rate of 21.3 per 100,000 or 75 times greater than the overall rate in Canada.

Two four-year-olds in the region died of acute rheumatic fever during the time period that was studied.

The report's authors say the incidence rate among First Nations in northwestern Ontario is related to late diagnosis, overcrowded housing and inadequate public health response.

"The health care system that exists treats us as second class citizens," said Sol Mamakwa, the health director with Shibogama First Nations Health Authority. "The system is built like this: if you're First Nations, if you live on reserve, you don't matter."



'The health care system that exists treats us as second class citizens,' says Sol Mamakwa, health director for the Shibogama First Nations Health Authority, based in Sioux Lookout. (Sol Mamakwa/Twitter)

A recent report by the Auditor General of Canada highlighted problems with the care Health Canada provides in remote First Nations where there are no resident doctors. It noted that only one in 45 nurses surveyed for the report had completed all of their mandatory training.

"We get lots of complaints where children and moms are sent back home [from the nursing station] with Tylenol even though they know there's something more to that," said Mamakwa.

"Even if they want a second opinion, or to go to another nurse, that's not an option," he said. "I think it's very difficult because you're limited to whoever is working at the nursing station."

A coordinated effort to educate health care providers about acute rheumatic fever and the importance of early diagnosis was hampered by the lack of continuity in nursing staff, according to the research.

There was an average delay in diagnosis of 88 days, the report said.

It also calls for a surveillance system for acute rheumatic fever, making it a reportable disease to Canada's Chief Public Health Officer.

Dr. John Guilfoyle, who was involved in the research, supports that recommendation but adds, "you can report this disease all you like but if you do not change the very conditions that generate it in the first place, it will not make a significant impact."

Those conditions, according to the research, are social determinants of health such as the inadequate and crowded housing in First Nations communities.

"Deficient and overcrowded housing is not a benign social condition," the authors write in their conclusion.

"For Canadians, it is a canary in the coal mine — bellwether for problems and serious deficiencies in our health care systems," Guilfoyle wrote in a commentary published this month in the Canadian Family Physician.

"It has eerie echoes of the report of Canada's first Chief Medical Officer, Dr Peter H. Bryce, who, as early as 1907, pointed out the adverse effects on the health of children who attended residential schools," Guilfoyle said.

Implementing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission would help reduce the widening gap between the health status of First Nations people and the rest of Canada, he said.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/rheumatic-fever-rates-in-some-ontario-first-nations-75-times-higher-than-rest-of-canada-1.3282074>

Aboriginal History & Heritage

Building for the future: Nunavut Heritage Society looks back for answers

New project to focus on Inuit architectural wisdom

JANE GEORGE, October 22, 2015 - 10:00 am



The Kitikmeot Heritage Society's Pamela Gross unrolls a willow mat stored in the May Hakongak library and cultural centre's archives. (PHOTO BY JANE GEORGE)

CAMBRIDGE BAY — Sleeping on top of a willow mat, covered by a caribou skin: there may be nothing else that's more comfortable and dry, suggests the Kitikmeot Heritage Society's program director, Pamela Gross.

That's what Inuinait in what is now western Nunavut's Kitikmeot region once used to keep the damp and cold away — and several willow mats, old and more recently-made, are among the society's archived items.

While gathering willows might not place high among activities now practiced here, preserving the knowledge of these age-old household construction techniques is.

That's why the Kitikmeot Heritage Society has partnered with architect and researcher Nancy Mackin on a new architectural project that is "environmentally and culturally appropriate" and will help sustain Arctic communities in the future.

The project, called Inuit Architectural Wisdom for Sustainable Arctic Communities, will involve people in Uluhaktok, Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay, and will help document

traditional Inuit structures and materials and reconsider how these can be used now in Arctic housing — although so far, only the first phase of funding is in place.

This past August, elders and youth met with Mackin to talk about what's involved in the design and making of a tupiq — and then build a traditional tent.

“Although it used two-by-fours instead of willows and canvas in its main construction,” Gross said.

During the workshop, participants worked on developing their architectural and drawing skills, and they discussed the tent's structure and purpose.

Mackin plans to travel again to Cambridge Bay in the next several months to oversee the building of a qarmaq (qamaaq) structure with a snow block or sod base.

And project organizers also plans to visit Kugluktuk in early 2016 to build a qalgiq (qaggiq), a snow house for communal living and drum dances.

Similar discussions and building projects will take place in Uluhaktok.

The second part of the survey will include modern architectural needs in the same three Arctic communities.

And working groups will then combine gathered knowledge on traditional structures, modern housing needs, and architectural model building to come up with new possibilities for Arctic architecture.

This final stage of project will lead to a book on history of Central Arctic housing with the models, drawings and interviews, called “Inuinait Architecture: Past, Present and Future.”

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674building_for_the_future_kitikmeot_heritage_society_looks_to_the_past_f/

Métis people in southern Alberta

By Submitted Article on October 20, 2015.

During the early fur trade in Canada, the Métis began to form a distinct cultural group.

The Métis were the children of First Nations women and European traders and their descendants. Many lived along the Red River in southern Manitoba while others lived along the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers where trapping and farming were their main occupations. During the summer months, the families piled their belongings into

noisy Red River carts and moved out onto the prairie to hunt buffalo. Robes and pemmican from the hunts were traded for guns and metal, ceramic, glass and fabric goods.

As the number of bison decreased in the 1860s and 1870s, smaller hunting parties began to winter in protected locales across the Prairies such as the Cypress Hills where small herds of bison still survived. The Métis built log cabins in sheltered places, close to wood, water and good grazing.

In 1966, land owner Lawrence Kajewski helped archeologist Jack Elliot locate the remains of the Métis cabins on Gros Ventre Creek. A few of the cabins and several associated cache pits were studied. Objects recovered during the excavations indicated that these cabins were used intermittently over an extended time period. The artifacts, of both Aboriginal and the European origin, included ammunition, clay pipes, pottery, thimbles, metal pots and scraping tools made from stone. Bones from bison, porcupine, deer and birds indicated the variety of animals hunted for food.

After consulting historical records, Elliott concluded that “two or more biologically related nuclear families” lived in these cabins. According to Oblate missionary Father Lestanc Métis families lived in the Cypress Hills as early as 1868. In 1880, NWMP Surgeon Dr. John Kittson reported that 20 families “gather there in the early fall to make their homes for the winter.”

Your old photos, documents and artifacts might have historical value. Please contact Galt Museum & Archives for advice before destroying them.

Direct Link: <http://lethbridgeherald.com/news/local-news/2015/10/20/metis-people-in-southern-alberta/>

Métis elder Ron Evans breathes life into his people's stories at festival

[Ian McGillis](#)

Published on: October 16, 2015 | Last Updated: October 16, 2015 8:00 PM EDT



Ron Evans is featured in several events as part of the Quebec Intercultural Storytelling Festival, including Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont: A Métis Elder Tells Stories of the Riel Rebellion, at McGill University on Oct. 20. This archival image shows Louis Riel on horseback. Montreal Gazette files

Ron Evans isn't sure of his age, saying only that he was born "the year the men didn't come home from the hunt." He grew up in one of the last nomadic Métis communities, living in the traditional ways. Home was variously Alberta, northeastern Saskatchewan, Montana, and many points between on travels by horse and wagon. Along the way, he became a living repository of his people's myths and defining stories. All in all, the Quebec Intercultural Storytelling Festival couldn't have found a better official honorary storytelling "elder" for the 13th edition of their annual event. Even if Evans himself, currently living in southern British Columbia, declines the "storyteller" tag.

"It was just the way we explained things," Evans said of the oral tradition he joined as a child. "It wasn't like I would say 'Tell me a story' when I was a kid. It would be like, 'Have we always lived here?' or 'Why does this look this way?' You don't grow up conscious of becoming a storyteller; you just learn to explain things through stories. Some stories are specific and formally taught because they are important to more than the family group but to the whole tribe or community. You must have permission to tell them. Historical stories and mythology, for example. I could go through a map of our whole land and I could tell you what our people did there and there and there as long as 400 years ago."

Evans has a favourite way of illustrating how his people's use of stories (for lack of a better word) can differ from that of non-natives, relating an anecdote from a time when he was improving his English in order to get involved in aboriginal rights activism.

"I was hired as an interpreter for an anthropologist," he recalled. "We were in a meeting that lasted a very long time, and when we came out he looked at his watch and said, 'The problem with you people is when I ask you a question you either just grunt or tell me a three-hour story.' Our way of answering questions is to tell a story, but there actually is no word for 'story' in my language."

One of Evans' festival events centres on the mythical figure of Wesakechak the Trickster – though again, he takes issue with the label, preferring Old Man (meaning ancestor), First Person, First Human, or First Man.

“He is one of a set of twins,” said Evans of Wesakechak. “One half of those twins is a picture of what a human being is like when they are in harmony with life and the world. Wesakechak is the opposite side of that harmony. He lives completely by his appetites. These stories are not jokes – they are among our most sacred mythology, but in a non-judgmental way. We don't think humans living like Wesakechak are bad, just funny. Foolish. We laugh rather than condemn.”

Another event revisits a story Canadian history continues to grapple with – the Riel Rebellion. I asked Evans what motivated him to revisit it: was it perhaps a sense that a seminal story is still under-told?

“My motivation is (festival organizer) Stéphanie (Bénéteau) asked me to!” he said. “Part of carrying the history of my people is that when people ask for the stories, you must give them. Yes, the (Riel Rebellion) story is under-told, in the sense that it is only partially told. It is all about (Louis) Riel and Gabriel Dumont because that is what historians have written documents on and can research. I was brought to a site run by the Riel Institute about a petition that was turned down many years ago. The group who made that petition was my own people! I was astonished to go over the names: I saw my grandparents and great-grandparents and people I grew up with. I had never seen their names in print! But it was only a list of names. They mean nothing unless you know their story.”

Having “told” to many different kinds of audiences, Evans is in a good position to comment on how reactions can differ. “One way of putting it could be that most people in western culture listen with their head and try to analyze the story,” he said. “The traditional people absorb the story, internalize it.” As for the future of the tradition in his own community, he is optimistic. “Some younger people have picked up on it and yes, there are enough of them that it will survive. Back in the 1950s we got around the question of the reluctance of elders to write things down by putting the stories on tape or film. So a lot of our oral tradition is (recorded). I have been asked to go make some tape for that archive, I just have not gotten around to it yet.”

Besides, says Evans, the true indication of a tradition's vitality is found not in archives and on stages but in the fabric of everyday life.

“I was at a powwow this summer, and I met a woman. I could tell she was Cree by the beading on her clothes. I chatted with her. Turns out she was a relative of mine. ‘You are my uncle,’ she said and hugged me. She said that because we had asked ‘Where are you from? Who are your people? Where did you live?’ And we discovered a common heritage, common stories, a common history. The oral tradition is the glue that holds us together.”

AT A GLANCE

Ron Evans is featured in several events as part of the Quebec Intercultural Storytelling Festival, including Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont: A Métis Elder Tells Stories of the Riel Rebellion, at McGill University, Leacock Building, Room 232 (Oct. 20, 8 p.m., free admission); Stories and Myths from the Métis at Concordia School of Community and Public Affairs (Oct. 22, 6 p.m., free admission); Wesakechak the Trickster, at Reginald J. P. Dawson Library (Oct. 23, 2 p.m., free admission); Stories and Songs from the First Peoples, with singer Jose Brown, at Maison de la culture Notre-Dame-De-Grâce (Oct. 23, 8 p.m., free admission); and The Métis (Ron Evans) Meet the Mi'kmaq (Robert Seven Crows), at Stewart Museum (Oct. 24, 2 p.m., \$10). The festival runs through Oct. 25. For full program details, visit festival-conte.qc.ca.

Direct Link: <http://montrealgazette.com/entertainment/books/metis-elder-ron-evans-breathes-life-into-his-peoples-stories>

Aboriginal Identity & Representation

Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin Says Media Could End Aboriginal Stereotypes

CP | By The Canadian Press

Posted: 10/16/2015 3:34 pm EDT Updated: 10/16/2015 4:59 pm EDT

SASKATOON — Canada's top judge says modern media could be used to end stereotypes of aboriginal people created by old western movies and TV shows such as "The Lone Ranger."

Supreme Court of Canada Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin told an administration of justice conference that the best time to change that attitude is when people are young.

"My own view is we should look at making this part of public school curriculum. And we should also accompany it with all sorts of cultural and other backups, like video and use the modern electronic media, which are often games and things like that," McLachlin said Friday in Saskatoon.

"Ironically, in the traditional western that developed in the Lone Ranger and Tonto and that kind of thing, the media was used to shape a certain perception of indigenous people and it was pretty effective and sometimes in very negative ways. Well, there's another way of looking at that — how do you use the media to get out the reality."

McLachlin says it's a complex problem and change won't happen overnight.

Justice Murray Sinclair, who led the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, says media can have a profound impact on aboriginal people and how they are perceived by others.

"Probably the world of media, the world of image portrayal is the most significant area of potential public education because the way that we project images into peoples minds, whether through the written word or through the video or through pictures, has a dramatic impact upon how they see people in reality," said Sinclair.

Sinclair, who was Canada's second aboriginal judge, says public schools have an important role to play in changing the relationship between aboriginal and non-aboriginal people.

But he says it needs to go further.

"In terms of the general public, people who will no longer be in public schools, people who are beyond that age, we also need to concentrate on how to change their knowledge base and image of indigenous people," said Sinclair.

"And that's through media, through videos, through the written word, through story, as well as through things like graphic novels."

The Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice conference was looking at the role justice plays in the lives of aboriginal people.

McLachlin says many aboriginal people fear or mistrust Canada's legal system.

She also says immigrants might not have faith in the system either and there could be broader implications from that.

"Minority groups may fear the justice system, avoid it, even refuse to engage with it and ultimately, perhaps sadly, decline to accept its legitimacy," said McLachlin.

"New Canadians who have come from countries where justice was equated with oppression and where the courts were corrupt, may find it difficult to trust the Canadian legal system and the Canadian courts."

Direct Link: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/10/16/chief-justice-suggests-using-electronic-media-to-help-end-aboriginal-stereotypes_n_8314510.html

How Inuk are you?... The Quiz

By [Eilís Quinn, Eye on the Arctic](#) Monday 19 October, 2015

Inuvery or Inu-white?

If you're from outside the Canadian Arctic you're probably reading those two words and thinking 'What the?'

But if you're reading this in one of Canada's Inuit regions, you're probably chuckling to yourself as we speak.

Difficult discussion

The issue of identity can be a hot-button issue in many indigenous communities, including those in Canada's North.

Recently, the issue came to the forefront in northern Canada when the national Inuit organization, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, elected a new president.

Natan Obed, originally from Nunatsiavut, the Inuit self government region in Canada's Atlantic Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador, was elected by ITK members with 54 per cent of the vote in September.

But during the process, Obed, was often challenged about his lack of fluency in the Inuit language and whether that made him unfit to represent Canadian Inuit as ITK leader.

The debate struck a chord with many Inuit whether they lived in the Far North or in southern Canada.

Any many shared their views on social media about having their "Inuk-ness" questioned both by southerners and people in their own communities.

Tackling issues through humour

But one Inuk resident in Nunavut decided to respond to the debate in a unique way... by using humour and creating a tongue-in-cheek quiz titled "How Inuk are You?"

Franco Buscemi works as a general manager in Iqaluit, the capital city of Canada's eastern Arctic territory of Nunavut, and is also an amateur comedian and runs the Mahaha.com comedy website with two friends.



Nunavut comedian Franco Buscemi. (Courtesy Franco Buscemi)

Buscemi , who describes his humour as ‘edgy’, says it allows him to take on the complex social issues of the North, but in a non-threatening way.

He describes Natan Obed as a friend and said his treatment during the ITK election process brought up his own experiences of people questioning his ‘Inukness’ because he spent his teenage years in Canada’s capital city of Ottawa.

“I’ve had Inuit call me white, and white people call me Inuit ... sometimes even on the same day,” Buscemi said in telephone interview from Iqaluit.

“It’s a small minority, but when that minority speaks up to you, it can really affect you.”

Feature Interview

For more on identity, politics and the role of humour in tackling controversial issues, Eye on the Arctic reached Franco Buscemi in Iqaluit:

[Listen](#)

Keeping the discussion going

The ‘How Inuk are you?’ quiz takes people through 10 multiple-choice questions on everything from preferred hunting practices (land & sea or the shelves of the coop?), transportation (dog team or pick-up truck?) and what to do when visiting someone’s home (knock on the door or walk in and help yourself to tea and bannock?)

“Some of it is touching on the serious side of identity but there’s also some things that can be a bit ridiculous around identity,” Buscemi said.

“We’re trying to bring a bit of the humorous side to it and help the discussion not become such a negative thing. Because it is a very good discussion and it needs to happen but it doesn’t have to be pointing fingers and saying who’s Inuk and who’s not.”

Inu-what?

We asked Franco Buscemi to define some of the quiz results for people not familiar with Inuit culture. Here’s some of what he told us:

Inuvery: “Like when you use your sick days for hunting, you know how to mix tradition with the modern settlement world.”

Inu-white: “You’re either white and do a lot of Inuk things or you’re Inuk and do a lot of white things.”

Not Even: “You’re not Inuk. Like, not at all and don’t even try.”

Direct Link: <http://www.rcinet.ca/en/2015/10/19/how-inuk-are-you-the-quiz/>

N.W.T.'s languages commissioner should be aboriginal, says educator

'I was hopeful that it would be somebody that knows the language and is aboriginal,' says Pauline Gordon

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 22, 2015 6:16 AM CT Last Updated: Oct 22, 2015 6:37 AM CT

Not everyone is happy with the appointment of a non-aboriginal person as the Northwest Territories' new languages commissioner.

[Shannon Gullberg has officially taken on the role](#) after serving as acting commissioner since March. She previously served in the post from 2004-2008.

Pauline Gordon, an Inuvialuktun speaker and educator in Fort Smith, says an aboriginal person who is fluent in an indigenous language should have been appointed.

"We always hoped that office would be staffed with a majority of aboriginal language speakers and aboriginal people," Gordon says.

She says aboriginal people have a better understanding of the issues.

"Knowing some knowledgeable people who speak the language and who know the issues of aboriginal language speakers and the languages, I was hopeful that it would be somebody that knows the language and is aboriginal from the territory."

Gullberg says the commissioner's most important role does not require that he/she be aboriginal.

"The key piece in this position is the ability to effectively and properly investigate complaints and to educate the public on their language rights," Gullberg says.

But Gordon says not every language concern will be in the form of a formal complaint.

"Because of institutions and how colonization has really made it difficult for our people to progress to the level of having all the skills necessary for them to make their concerns known in writing," Gordon says.

She admits Gullberg is qualified to fill the position of languages commissioner, but says there are plenty of qualified aboriginal people who could also do the job.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/n-w-t-s-languages-commissioner-should-be-aboriginal-says-educator-1.3283389>

Winnipeg kids store mistakenly sells aboriginal-themed costume with 'rubbies' tag

Store owner says tag was on all costumes and was unfortunate mistake, will stop selling similar costumes

By Teghan Beaudette, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 22, 2015 12:07 PM CT Last Updated: Oct 22, 2015 6:11 PM CT



Rachel Lyon, a First Nations grandma who spotted the costume on Facebook, said she was disgusted and hurt. (Jaison Empson/CBC)

A children's clothing store in Winnipeg is under fire after mistakenly selling a faux-aboriginal themed costume and tagging it "rubbies."

Once Upon a Child on Ellice Avenue was selling a tan kids costume with feathers, fringe and beaded necklaces with a price tag that said "rubbies" until someone shared the tag and costume on Facebook.

"I just thought, 'Oh my god. I can't believe I'm seeing this.' And it's actually a store called 'Once Upon a Child' that's selling this?" said Rachel Lyon, a First Nations grandma who spotted the costume on Facebook. "For a child to wear that? You know, what are you going to tell your friends? 'Oh, you've got a Native costume?' and then they're going to joke around, 'No, it's a rubbies costume.' I wouldn't let my child wear a costume like that."



"That's a traditional dress or clothing we wear. We don't wear it to go out trick-or-treating. We wear it to powwows," said Rachel Lyon. "It's only for occasions where you go to a powwow and dance. It's to celebrate who you are. It's nothing to wear for a Halloween costume. It's just horrible." (Facebook)

But store owner Dave Dunlop said it was an innocent mistake.

"When I woke up this morning my wife was at the kitchen table at 7 a.m. bawling her eyes out reading Facebook. I said, 'What's the matter?' she said, 'I don't know. Someone's taken huge offence to our costume,'" said Dunlop.

The store is a franchise and sells "Rubies" brand costumes.

"One costume brand name that we have here, it's called Rubies, it's R-U-B-I-E-S. Someone in Minneapolis, who knows how many decades ago, spelled it with two B's instead of one," he said, adding whoever entered it into the system likely mistyped.

At the time, about 20 children's costumes were all out with the same tag.

"When I got to work this morning I talked to one of my friends who is Native and we talked about it. He explained it to me. What a rubbie was and I was like, 'Oh are you kidding me.' So it was just a coincidence – an unfortunate one," he said.

Rubby or rubbie is an offensive term for a person who uses rubbing alcohol as a cheap liquor substitute.

Dunlop and his wife Christina have pulled all the costumes with the tag. They've also talked to their head office about adjusting the misspelled label in the system.

"It's terrible. If we've offended anybody, we're very upset about it. My wife bawled her eyes out for hours this morning. She's not a racist person and we're not a racist store at all," he said, adding they have a diverse staff that includes an indigenous person. "It's unfortunate that this happened, but we're trying to do our best to make it right and fix the problem."

He said they've instructed staff not to put any costumes on the floor that could be offensive.

"We're talking to our girls also, 'If you see a costume like that, that could be controversial, we're not going to put it on the floor.' But I mean, it's no different than any other Halloween store in the city," he said.

'We're a proud people'

Aboriginal-themed costumes have repeatedly caused stirs in Winnipeg and elsewhere in Canada, and [some Halloween stores have pulled theirs after they stirred controversy](#).

"That's a traditional dress or clothing we wear. We don't wear it to go out trick-or-treating. We wear it to powwows," said Lyon. "It's only for occasions where you go to a powwow and dance. It's to celebrate who you are. It's nothing to wear for a Halloween costume. It's just horrible."

She said she used to manage a retail store, and she never would've let the costume be put on the floor.

Lyon said she was shocked and hurt, and it speaks to an ongoing issue with racism in Winnipeg.

"We're a proud people. Maybe some people do bring us down, but it's their loss, and they need to find themselves," she said. "We're people that work. We have lives. We have children that we have to bring up and we try to bring them up as positive as we can. And people do this to us and sell costumes that hurt us. And it shouldn't be that way."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/winnipeg-kids-store-mistakenly-sells-aboriginal-themed-costume-with-rubbies-tag-1.3284112>

Aboriginal-themed Halloween costumes upset local First Nations leader

by [Alison Bailey](#)

Posted Oct 22, 2015 11:45 am PDT

Last Updated Oct 22, 2015 at 12:17 pm PDT



Some local stores are selling costumes called 'Noble Warrior' and 'Native Princess'

The Union of BC Indian Chiefs thinks retailers are getting their costumes off-shore

VANCOUVER (NEWS 1130) – Many of us love becoming somebody else on Halloween, but is it OK to dress up in something that stems from another person’s heritage?

There are a number of local stores that are selling costumes that are called ‘Noble Warrior’ or ‘Native Princess.’

Grand Chief Stewart Philip with the Union of BC Indian Chiefs says it’s unfortunate retailers continue to carry these costumes.

“I would suspect that they get their products off-shore from other countries that do not know or understand this is an issue here in North America.”

Philip says the fact these costumes are still in stores reflects broader attitudes in society. “It’s going to take a lot of concerted effort to deal with these racial notions of indigenous peoples in this country.”

These costumes are sold by a company called Spirit Halloween which is based in the US.

“At Spirit Halloween it is never our intent to offend or insult any party. For 32 years, our mission has been to provide a unique experience to our local communities and listening to their valuable feedback has helped make Halloween better, year after year,” the company’s Trisha Lombardo told [NEWS 1130](http://www.news1130.com/2015/10/22/aboriginal-themed-halloween-costumes-upsets-local-first-nations-leader/) in a statement.

Direct Link: <http://www.news1130.com/2015/10/22/aboriginal-themed-halloween-costumes-upsets-local-first-nations-leader/>

Aboriginal Inequality & Poverty

Northwestern First Nations job skills boosted

posted Oct 20, 2015 at 4:00 PM

TERRACE - A total of 278 First Nations people will benefit from \$4-million in new funding to help them become job ready for the liquefied natural gas (LNG) sector.

The announcement was made Oct. 19 in Terrace with provincial aboriginal and reconciliation minister John Rustad, Nisga'a Lisims Government president Mitchell Stevens and Nisga'a Lisims Government executive chairperson Kevin McKay in attendance.

Over the next three years, a \$2.1 million Nisga'a Lisims Path to Employment program will provide training, work experience and entry to trades apprenticeships for 215 participants from the Nisga'a communities.

The program covers introduction to trades or carpentry foundational skills, employment placement and work experience, as well as basic job skills and acquiring work skills certificates.

These include first aid/CPR, road safety, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) and driver training. The program will be administered by the Nisga'a Employment and Skills Training (NEST) Department of the Nisga'a Lisims Government.

Over the next three years, a \$1.6 million environmental stewardship technicians training program will also be provided to 48 participants from up to 13 First Nations communities on the central and north coast and Haida Gwaii.

Participants will receive industry-recognized training and certifications in areas such as environmental monitoring of fish and fish habitat, water, lands and construction sites and conducting inventories of archaeological features.

They will also gain knowledge and experience in monitoring environmental compliance, protected area management and small motor servicing. The program will be administered by the Great Bear Initiative Society and Vancouver Island University.

A further investment of \$300,000 over the next three years will support the creation of a Gitanyow First Nation Employment and Training Institute which will develop and deliver a range of skills training programs.

The funding will also provide 15 Gitanyow members with accredited training in areas such as wildlife monitoring; transportation of dangerous goods; All terrain vehicle (ATV) training, as well as land clearing and construction.

The program will be administered by the Gitanyow Huwilp Society.

All three programs are being funded through the B.C. government's \$30 million Aboriginal Skills Training Development Fund.

The fund supports strategies outlined in B.C.'s Skills for Jobs Blueprint and the overall goal of increasing the number of Aboriginal people in the provincial workforce by 15,000 over the next 10 years.

Said Mitchell Stevens from the Nisga'a Lisims Government: "The Nisga'a Nation strives for sustainable prosperity and self-reliance and the Nisga'a Lisims Path to Employment program will contribute towards our vision."

"The program adds to the capacity of our people to participate in the major developments which are coming soon to our region. NEST has already successfully delivered training programs to our people and this funding will enhance NEST's resources to deliver even more," he said.

Direct Link: <http://www.terracestandard.com/news/334845041.html>

Supreme Court denies appeal of cut to First Nations welfare rates

ANDREW RANKIN Cape Breton Bureau

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Eskasoni Chief Leroy Denny, right, and Membertou Chief Terry Paul field questions from the media in October 2014. (STEVE WADDEN / File)

The Supreme Court of Canada will not allow the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs to appeal a decision allowing the federal government to cut social assistance rates for First Nations people.

“We are disappointed and upset by the court’s decision,” said Chief Leroy Denny, lead chief of the social portfolio for the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs. “Our priority has always been our Mi'kmaq community members who are on social assistance and are surviving on very little money. We had hoped that the courts would recognize that, too.”

Thursday’s Supreme Court decision has been four years in the making. Members of the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs were told in 2011 that the federal government planned to align social assistance with rates given to non-native recipients.

In 2013, the province’s chiefs, along with chiefs from New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, won a legal battle, Chief Jesse Simon vs. Attorney General, halting the government from implementing its proposal.

The decision was later overturned by the Federal Court of Appeal, which found Ottawa did have the right to implement proposed cuts unilaterally and without studying impacts. Changes to First Nations social assistance rates are expected in April.

“We obviously still have major concerns moving forward,” said Denny, also the chief of Eskasoni. “We need to know exactly what this is going to look like for our people and how it’s going to affect the bottom line. We hope that we can call on the newly elected Liberal government to work with us to ensure that our people aren’t starved in order to create Canada’s definition of a better life.”

First Nations communities argued they weren’t adequately consulted throughout the amendment process and that changes would result in significant cuts, including the removal of shelter and utilities subsidies and the claw back of the National Child Benefit.

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada provides social assistance to on-reserve residents currently at a higher rate than provincial rates in the Maritimes.

Denny said the government’s plan involves eliminating housing and utility subsidies for on-reserve residents, while those same benefits would have remained for people on provincial social assistance.

It is unfair to compare First Nations social assistance rates with provincial rates, said Denny, because non-native people have easier access to other welfare programs that aren’t available on reserves, such as job training, child care, transportation and maternal health.

As well, he said, unemployment rates are higher on reserves, especially ones off main highways or away from urban centres.

“The Harper government knew there would be serious consequences if they went ahead with this plan,” said Denny. “We conducted our studies and they weren’t interested. This is the federal government telling us what is best for our families and communities.”

Naiomi Metallic, a lawyer with Burchells LLP in Halifax who has represented the Mi’kmaq in the court cases, could not be reached after Thursday’s ruling. But in March she told The Chronicle Herald that the policy change could mean First Nations people would see their welfare funds cut nearly in half.

“In some cases, it would mean a difference of \$300 or \$400 (a month), which you can appreciate is significant when you’re only getting about \$800,” said Metallic.

No one from Aboriginal Affairs could be reached for comment Thursday.

Direct Link: <http://thechronicleherald.ca/novascotia/1318170-supreme-court-denies-appeal-of-cut-to-first-nations-welfare-rates>

Aboriginal Jobs & Labour

Fear, favouritism, clash of cultures fuel high GN turnover, insiders say

Part two in our series on workplace bullying in Nunavut's public service

THOMAS ROHNER, October 19, 2015 - 6:55 am



The Government of Nunavut will find itself with more empty cubicles like this one if they don't do more to rid the public service of its toxic work environment, MLAs and experts say. (PHOTO BY THOMAS ROHNER)



Iqaluit-Tasiluk MLA George Hickes says it's important that GN departments follow the Public Service Act. (FILE PHOTO)



Nunavut Employees Union president Bill Fennell says Inuit employees are often reluctant to formally complain about workplace harassment through the union's grievance procedure. (PHOTO BY THOMAS ROHNER)



Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu MLA Pat Angnakak says civil servants have come to her seeking relief from workplace harassment because they're afraid to go anywhere else. (PHOTO BY THOMAS ROHNER)

Workplace harassment in the Government of Nunavut's public service affects Inuit more than non-Inuit, politicians and experts say, leading many beneficiaries to quit their jobs.

George Hickes, the MLA for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, recently told *Nunatsiaq News* that some of his constituents have been harassed so badly at their GN jobs, they felt they had no choice but to resign.

And all too often, these constituents are beneficiaries, Hickes said.

“In general, Inuit people don’t like confrontation. It’s a lot easier just to quit your job,” he said.

That could be contributing to the government’s struggle to reach Inuit representation targets within its workforce, which are “terrible” at middle and senior management levels, he said.

According to the GN’s own statistics, beneficiaries filled 24 per cent of middle and 21 per cent of senior management government jobs in 2014. That’s out of a total workforce of 4,529.

It’s interesting to note that among Nunavut’s 25 communities, Iqaluit has the lowest number of Inuit public servants at 35 per cent.

Pat Angnakak, another Iqaluit MLA, told *Nunatsiaq News* that favouritism in hiring may also contribute to those low numbers, as Southerners tend to hire other Southerners.

“I hear people talk about that all the time — it’s who you know, not what you know,” Angnakak said.

And many of the constituents who have approached Angnakak, saying they have nowhere else to bring their workplace conflicts, told her they felt let down by their union.

When faced with workplace harassment, beneficiaries tend to quit because they don’t feel empowered or educated enough to go through the process of filing an official grievance, said Bill Fennell, president of the Nunavut Employees Union.

“I know some Inuit who are strong activists for workers’ rights... but a lot of beneficiaries think the union is a just a deduction on their paycheck,” Fennell said.

He added that he hopes to hold workshops in Nunavut communities in the months ahead to educate workers on their rights and the kind of support the NEU can offer.

An expert in workplace mobbing suggested to *Nunatsiaq News* that southern Canadians grow up acquiring skills to deal with bureaucracies.

(You can read more about that [here](#), in the first installment of our two-part series on workplace harassment in the GN workforce.)

The same cannot be said for many Aboriginal people, said the expert — Ken Westhues, professor emeritus at the University of Waterloo.

Westhues said Aboriginal cultures often emphasize “kinship values,” which rank family ties over individualistic goals.

And an emphasis on kinship values can actually be a disadvantage when mobbing incidents occur in bureaucratic environments, he said.

“When Aboriginal people get into trouble, they’re more inclined to phone a cousin or brother, while a southerner would be more likely to appeal on the basis of a policy,” he said.

Workplace victims are usually less familiar with policies than their mobbers, Westhues said — and only have a fraction of the resources with which to defend themselves.

“Most workers in most work places don’t know how to file a harassment grievance, or how arbitration works, so they’re at a severe disadvantage,” he said.

Westhues said that in work environments where the democratic practice of asking questions is quelled, it’s easy for coworkers of a mobbing target to become bystanders.

“Our best chance at reducing incidents of mobbing is for us to become aware of our inclinations towards mobbing and then we’re more able to control it, and to step back from the mob,” he said.

One way GN workers can address a harassment concern is by contacting their union, NEU president Fennell said.

Workers may also file a complaint under the Public Service Act.

That complaint must first be made internally, to a senior manager or any appropriate deputy head. But that process can be intimidating, Angnakak and Hickes both said.

It’s one of the reasons the territorial government’s ethics officer was created — so employees can ask the ethics officer for advice before filing an internal complaint.

If, after filing a complaint, a worker is not satisfied with the outcome, the complaint can then be filed with the ethics officer, who operates independently of the public service.

But the ethics officer, according to the Public Service Act, can only investigate an allegation of harassment that is deemed a “serious breach of the code of values and ethics.”

Workers can also file a complaint directly with the ethics officer if they fear a backlash from co-workers as a result of filing an internal complaint.

Nunavut's first ethics officer, Manitoban Jeffrey Schnoor, who took office in April, told *Nunatsiaq News* Oct. 16 that he has fielded 40 requests for advice and information since taking office, roughly 14 of which included references to harassment.

Schnoor said he has opened 11 files involving "disclosures of wrongdoing." Here's how they break down:

- two were made internally to GN managers so Schnoor "cannot say with certainty" what they are about;
- of the nine remaining, seven are "substantially" about some form of harassment;
- of those seven, two do not meet the definition of wrongdoing and two are not supported by evidence;
- the three remaining files are open and under investigation; and,
- there are two other files that allege reprisals as a result of submitting a disclosure of wrongdoing — one is not supported by evidence and one remains open.

Both Iqaluit MLAs said they have concerns with the powers of the newly created ethics officer position, but they agree it's a step in the right direction.

Angnakak said the ethics officer's role should be broadened to include handling complaints from workers who feel they're targeted by senior managers.

Right now, that's not necessarily covered under a "serious breach of the code of values or ethics" as described in the Public Service Act.

Hickes said it's important that GN departments follow the Public Service Act closely to avoid the favouritism and even nepotism — favouritism to relatives — that can occur in local hiring practices due to Nunavut's small labour pool.

Educating employees on the prevention and disclosure of wrongdoing — which, in Nunavut, is the responsibility of the finance minister and deputy heads — is key, Hickes said.

And so is creating environments in which workers feel valued and dignified, he added, and in which they have opportunities to advance their knowledge and skills.

But instead, Hickes said, a culture of defensiveness and fear exists throughout the GN, where workers are scared to even make small complaints.

Numerous times, Hickes said, workers have been accused of "leaking" information to him, when, in fact, he and his legislative researchers find the information by tracking reports that are already in the public domain.

“This fear of reprisal and the defensive posture of senior employees needs to end,” Hickes said.

Hickes said the sooner GN employees feel supported, the sooner retention problems will lessen and Inuit representation improve.

Angnakak also said senior bureaucrats need to remember to treat their workers as human beings.

“I want the GN to be the workplace of choice. Not because it’s the only choice I’ve got, but because I want to work there,” Angnakak said.

If you are a GN employee who’s filed complaints of bullying or harassment, feel the remedies available to you have failed and want to share your story, you can contact *Nunatsiaq News* reporter Thomas Rohner at thomas.rohner@gmail.com.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674fear_favouritism_culture_clash_fuel_high_gn_turnover_insiders_say/

Aboriginal Politics

Ottawa Inuit get a side order of politics at monthly feast

“I like Justin, he’s following his father’s footsteps”

LISA GREGOIRE, October 16, 2015 - 8:20 am



Volunteers and staff with Tungasuvvingat Inuit serve up stew during a country food lunch in Ottawa Oct. 15. (PHOTOS BY LISA GREGOIRE)



Iqaluit-born Uqitjuatsi Sageaktook asks Ottawa-Vanier federal candidates why people in Ontario can't get jobs in Quebec.



Ottawa-Vanier Liberal incumbent Mauril Bélanger takes questions from the audience at a country foods feast for Inuit in Ottawa Oct. 15.



Mary Alainga-Fraser pressed federal candidates for details on how they would lower the cost of food in the North and how soon they'd build affordable houses there.

OTTAWA — Mixing food and politics is not always a good idea, especially when the food is free and the people are hungry.

“We’re here to eat, not vote,” one man said loudly during a country food feast at the Our Lady of Assumption church in Ottawa’s Vanier neighbourhood on Oct. 15.

“We have bus transfers that are going to expire,” said another man before rising, perturbed, to go out for a smoke.

But Elections Canada’s Georgia Maracle was unfazed in the church basement hall, standing before a crowd of 60 or so people, mostly Inuit, and explaining what’s needed if people want to vote in the federal election Oct. 19.

The free monthly feast is hosted by Ottawa's Inuit service agency, Tungasuvvingat Inuit, but organizers decided to offer patrons a value-added lunch this month, inviting Maracle as well as Ottawa-Vanier candidates to meet Inuit in their riding.

They also invited Delores Peltier, a First Nations representative from the City for All Women Initiative, to arouse interest in the election among Aboriginal voters and to circulate brochures outlining where the four federal parties stand on issues that affect them, such as housing, food security and childcare.

"It's important they hear our voices," Peltier said. "It's important for them to listen to us and our concerns."

Some ignored the speeches entirely, preferring to socialize in Inuktitut with friends and family members, as they do every month.

When *Nunatsiaq News* asked people whether they planned to vote in Monday's election, some looked down and picked at their food, some said they have no identification, some offered a noncommittal, "I don't know, maybe."

But others were more engaged. Some said they'd already voted in advance polls and others said they were going to head to the polls Oct. 19.

Uqitjuatsi Sageaktook, daughter of Iqaluit elder Inuapik Sageaktook, said she doesn't usually vote, but this time around, she wants to make sure Conservative leader Stephen Harper doesn't get back in as prime minister. She's voting Liberal, she said.

"I like Justin [Trudeau]. He's following his father's footsteps," she said. "He's going to legalize marijuana. Some people don't like that but it helps a lot of people eat and sleep. Even doctors prescribe it."

Sober for 19 years after suffering from alcoholism for many years, she said booze is worse and she wonders why it's legal while pot isn't.

There were other Liberal fans in the audience. Akikuluk Shappa, who said the prayer to begin the feast, said he too is keen to get Harper out.

"He says Trudeau is not ready, well, we'll see," said Shappa, laughing. "I'll be around on Monday to see [Trudeau] win and then I'll celebrate."

After most people had finished eating and Peltier had finished her presentation, Ottawa-Vanier Liberal incumbent Mauril Bélanger and New Democratic party contender Emilie Taman made brief speeches outlining issues of potential interest.

Only about two dozen people remained to hear the political speeches.

Taman, a former Crown prosecutor, said she quit to run for office because she disagrees with how the Harper government was dealing with justice issues.

She spoke about several issues including the NDP's promised \$15 per day childcare plan and then said, "but the most important thing is to get rid of Stephen Harper and our party is the best way to do that." Applause filled the hall.

Bélanger got applause too, with promises of more social housing, in Ottawa and in the North, and \$40 million, over four years, to address shortcomings in the Nutrition North subsidy program.

Mary Alainga — daughter of the late Simonie Alainga who works for Corrections Canada with Inuit on parole — didn't pull any punches. She wanted to know specifics: how will you fix the northern food subsidy and when will you build the houses?

Bélanger said the Liberal social housing strategy will be rolled out over 10 years, but he offered little on how his party plans to fix Nutrition North except to say that the cost of nutritious food in the North is "unbelievable" and that they will find a way to lower food prices.

"That's what we intend to do should we form this government," he said.

Taman said, respectfully, that the Liberals had plenty of time to fix the former food mail program when they were in power and didn't. She said the NDP remains firmly committed to northern food security and social housing for northerners.

A young man then rose to say he works for the airlines and that Southerners have no idea how hard it is to feed a family in the North. He challenged both candidates to move north and try to survive there.

"Without a \$100,000 salary," Alainga added. "With a \$40,000 salary."

Bélanger said he might consider doing that when he retires.

The Ottawa country food feast is held at noon on the third Thursday of every month at Assumption church on Olmstead Street. All are welcome.

Contact TI at (613) 565-5885 for more information on this and other programs and services they offer. Or visit their website [here](#).

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674ottawa_inuit_get_a_side_order_of_politics_at_monthly_feast/

Mulcair: NDP government would implement resource revenue sharing with Indigenous nations

[National News](#) | October 16, 2015 by [APTN National News](#)

APTN National News

NDP leader Tom Mulcair says his government would implement resource revenue sharing agreements with Indigenous nations modeled on the 1975 agreement struck between Quebec, the Cree and the Inuit in that province.

Mulcair said, if elected, an NDP government would ensure all major resource development projects would include resource revenue sharing with the Indigenous nations that are impacted by the project.

Mulcair said he sees the 1975 Paix des Braves agreement signed over the massive Hydro-Quebec James Bay hydroelectric project. The agreement, which has been modified over a dozen times since then, was signed between Quebec, the Cree and the Inuit in northern Quebec.

“The Paix de Braves has become a model for a nation-to-nation respectful respectful relations with First Nations and there has been revenue sharing from what has been produced from that big development project,” said Mulcair. “The same has to become systematic across the country. The best way to recognize that we are all in this together, if we do develop a nation-to-nation approach, of course First Nation, Inuit and Metis people have to have their fair share.”

Mulcair made the statement during *APTN*’s final virtual town hall with federal party leaders leading up to the Oct. 19 election.

A virtual town hall with Green Party leader Elizabeth May aired Tuesday and a town hall with Liberal leader Justin Trudeau aired on Wednesday.

The virtual town halls, hosted by *APTN* anchor Cheryl McKenzie, featured questions from Indigenous people across the country.

The Conservative party did not respond to *APTN*’s invitation to participate in the town halls.

All the town halls are available on *APTN*’s news website.

Mulcair said during his town hall that an NDP government would follow existing Supreme Court of Canada rulings and consult and accommodate every step of the way with First Nations when it came to resource development projects on their territories.

If a First Nation said no to a project, an NDP government would comply within “that spectrum” laid down by the Supreme Court and the principles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

“No would mean no with respect to the existing rights, that are treaty rights, inherent rights and Canada’s international obligations, of course yes,” said Mulcair.

Mulcair said an NDP government would reject the Northern Gateway Pipeline project.

On the Energy East pipeline, Mulcair said the project would be put through an enhanced environmental review that would not only include consultation and accommodation, but also study its environmental impact including its potential effect on greenhouse gases.

Mulcair said, if elected, his government would also move quickly on education, committing \$1.8 billion over four years and then implementing a five per cent escalator for every year after that would hit a total of \$4.8 billion over eight years.

“I don’t accept there should be that funding gap between the funding for First Nation schools and other Canadians,” said Mulcair.

He also said the issue of education, dovetails with the lack of housing in many First Nation and Inuit communities and high suicide rates.

Mulcair said the recent Coroner’s inquest in Nunavut into the suicide of an 11 year-old showed that the issues are interrelated. The Coroner’s inquest heard that the child lived in a house that had between 18 to 22 people living there.

“How does a child who grows up in a home with 18 or 22 people in it is ever supposed to do their homework?” said Mulcair. “If it is causing that level of despair that even a child winds out taking their own life... Well then we have an obligation to start acting.”

An NDP government would put \$100 million on the table for housing, said Mulcair.

Mulcair said his government, if elected, would also focus on providing drinking water in First Nation communities.

“Canada has more fresh water than any country on earth, yet the people who were here first don’t have access to clean, safe drinking water in far too many communities,” he said.

Mulcair said an NDP government would also create a cabinet committee that would deal specifically with First Nation, Inuit and Metis peoples that he would chair.

“I am going to chair that committee to make sure to we do three things every time we take a decision in our government: That we respect first Nation treaty rights, their inherent rights and Canada’s obligations to her first people,” said Mulcair.

Mulcair said that idea was inspired by Cree NDP candidate Romeo Saganash would play a “key” role in an NDP government.

During the virtual town hall, Mulcair repeated his pledge to hold a public inquiry into murdered and missing Indigenous women within the first 100 days of taking power.

Mulcair also revealed his own family link to Metis hero Louis Riel.

The NDP leader said his great-great grandfather Honore Mercier, who eventually became premier of Quebec, helped shelter Riel’s children after he was hanged.

Mulcair mentioned the historical fact while answering a question on the Metis land claim in Manitoba. Mulcair said an NDP government would engage with the Metis to settle the claim.

“We have every intention of righting that historical wrong,” said Mulcair.

Mulcair said an NDP government would usher in a “new era” in relations with Indigenous people in the country.

“All the problems we are describing now, 100 per cent of them are the results of Conservative and Liberal governments before,” said Mulcair. “So the NDP is the only party that can propose honest change from what we have gone through in the past.”

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/10/16/mulcair-ndp-government-would-implement-resource-revenue-sharing-with-indigenous-nations/>

Groups try to increase number of aboriginal candidates, voters

By Creeden Martell, The Starphoenix October 16, 2015

Voter turnout among First Nations people has been low in recent years.

Bill C-23, also known as The Fair Elections Act, came into law last summer and the registration process has not become easier. Voter identification cards are no longer accepted at polling stations, voters have to register with street addresses, and the act of vouching has been restricted.

Vouching allows a registered voter to confirm the credentials and identity of another would-be voter in the same riding. Many reserves in Canada do not have official street names, so band members often require someone to vouch for them at the polling station. Under new rules, a person can only vouch for one other voter.

Greg Poelzer, executive chair of the International Chair for Northern Governance and Development (ICNGD), said aboriginal voters will mobilize despite the new, difficult regulations.

"Aboriginal people have enough clout in enough ridings to determine who's going to be the Prime Minister of Canada. That's the power aboriginal voters have this time," Poelzer said.

He predicts First Nations voters will mobilize in record numbers, despite the difficulties in registering. He cites the larger number of aboriginal candidates, First Nations-based policies and the increasing number of middle-class First Nation and Métis voters.

Poelzer calls the rise of the middle class among First Nations an untold and missing success story.

The number of aboriginal people getting post-secondary education has increased

over the last 30 years at a significant rate, he noted. Poelzer has researched aboriginal political participation in northern Saskatchewan. Of the 51 ridings Assembly of First Nations national Chief Perry Bellegarde highlighted that could swing the election, there were 20 in which the number of First Nations people who did not vote was greater than the margin of victory for the winning candidate during the 2011 election, he said.

Poelzer noted the Desnetha-Missinippi-Churchill River riding in particular, where

victor Rob Clarke won by 794 votes over then-NDP candidate Lawrence Joseph. The riding was home to 43,739 registered voters, but only 22,023 actually cast ballots. The turnout rate was 50.3 per cent.

Renewed interest in voting is also due to the efforts of grassroots movements such as Indigenous Vote Sask, a group initially dedicated to raising awareness about the possibility of a spring election. The movement evolved into something bigger, and the people involved focused on the potential impact the Fair Elections Act would have on voters. The new goal became raising awareness and getting people talking.

Indigenous Vote Sask visited four cities in Saskatchewan and issued a call for volunteers to engage the conversation. They then began a call for voters to elect indigenous candidates.

"We would definitely like to see more indigenous members of parliament as decision makers in a Canadian context," said Glenda Abbott, one of group's members. "I believe we need indigenous leaders in all capacities, in the country and within our nations."

The group also held a panel entitled "To Vote or Not to Vote?" in early September. It addressed barriers to voting in rural Canada and the colonial history of elections. "Our

nationhood has been under threat for a very long time and that is also a barrier that presented itself when talking about voting in a federal election," Abbott said.

Many communities were responsive to the group in getting voters registered. Some already had people in place working on Indigenous Vote Sask's ideas.

The group has plans to provide non-partisan rides to polling stations in the Saskatoon-West riding on election day.

Marie-France Kenny, regional spokeswoman for Elections Canada, said there has been an effort to help people who live on reserves register to vote. Community outreach officers have been out to reserves around Saskatchewan to help with duties such as pre-registration at band offices and community centres. Elections Canada staff have also attended tribal agencies' general meetings to ensure proper information is spread.

Kenny emphasized Elections Canada has attempted to accommodate those who do not have street addresses through confirmation of residence letters. Would-be voters can obtain them by going to their reserve's band office or administration.

Letters of confirmation can also be obtained through outreach organizations like The Lighthouse in Saskatoon.

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/life/groups+increase+number+aboriginal+candidates+voters/11442581/story.html>

PANEL: Young first nations voters in Yukon reflect on federal election campaign

'It's gotten to be a little bit much,' says one young voter, overwhelmed by rhetoric

By A New Day, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 16, 2015 4:21 PM CT Last Updated: Oct 19, 2015 6:26 AM CT



Geri-Lee Buyck is a 24 year-old member of the Nacho Nyak Dun First Nation and a first time voter. She's said she will vote strategically on Oct. 19. (Geri-Lee Buyck)

This is the third in a series of CBC Yukon panel discussions with three young First Nations voters.

Young aboriginal Canadians have traditionally been under-represented at the ballot box, but some Yukoners think this time will be different. Sandi Coleman, host of CBC Yukon's A New Day, reconvened a panel of three young First Nations voters to talk about the long campaign, and what's on their mind as they look ahead to voting day.

Dana Tizya-Tramm, 28, is a member of the Vuntut Gwichin First Nation;

Geri-Lee Buyck, 24, is a member the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation;

and **Steven Kormendy**, 23, is a member of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation;



28 year old Dana Tizya-Tramm is a member of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation. He says he'll vote for the first time on Monday. (Dana Tizya-Tramm)

Portions of the discussion have been edited and condensed.

Last week we asked you about strategic voting. Dana and Geri-Lee, you were both wrestling with this. Have you come to any conclusions?

Tizya-Tramm: Most definitely I have. I think I jumped on the train with a lot of people over strategic voting when the fact of the matter is that this election is not the 2011

election. The Green Party does not have the same presence it had then. So there's actually no vote splitting right now. There's a lot of room for either party to take over. I think if a lot of people had that kind of information it would kind of calm down, because you hear a lot of talk about vote splitting.

Buyck: I think I'm 99 per cent decided. It's hard. I think I'm just going to go with my instinct and my gut.

Steven, you said last week your mind was made up. Are you still holding to that?



Steven Kormendy, 23, is a member of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, currently living in Victoria, B.C. where he is a student. (submitted)

Kormendy: Yes, I am. Given the stats, I'm not going to leave it to chance. I have one priority this election, and I feel that strategic voting is the best way to realize that priority.

What do you think of the Council of Yukon First Nations taking the unusual step of urging people to vote strategically, and saying that means Liberal?

Kormendy: I find it to be a really interesting move, and I'm not sure that it's something I agree with. It's something that I hope doesn't discourage other indigenous people to enter the political arena. But at the same time, this really dictates the urgency to oust the Conservative government, and that's something I agree with.

Buyck: I think it's a bold statement to make. I totally understand where they're coming from and why they're doing so. This is a very critical election and it's going to affect us all. Has it swayed [my vote]? I don't know. I'm just on the fence.

Tizya-Tramm: I definitely was surprised, and definitely that they picked the Liberals as well. You can really tell that the CYFN is between a rock and a hard place. They really can't see any progress being made with Conservatives. And they're doing anything they can to get the word out. But there's a part of me that doesn't like it as well. In my opinion, the Liberals could have formed a coalition with the NDP way earlier on, and we could have gotten Harper right out then. But the Liberals said no. And especially with things like C-51, there's just a lot of issues that I think will be missed if people just take direction from [CYFN Grand Chief] Ruth Massie. But at the same time, it's the lesser of evils as well.

Looking back on this election campaign, what's going to stand out for you?

Kormendy: The polarization. On social media, the amount of political backlash that seems to have come about on both sides of the political spectrum has been crazy. And it's something that I hope kind of moderates after the end of this election. Friends on Facebook totally bashing each other, the negative ad campaigns you see on TV every day, it's gotten to be a little much, in my opinion.

Buyck: I have to agree with what Steven said about social media and just being bombarded on Facebook. It's just been an overwhelming amount. It's good that people are stating their opinion and stuff. At the same time, though, it has been kind of overwhelming in a negative way as well, and at this point I'm just waiting for it to be over.

Tizya-Tramm: Most definitely the intensity of it. This politics is like watching NASCAR — it goes on for a long time, but there's some jockeying for position! And this is really pulling citizens off the sidelines and into the games. I recently came through Whitehorse, and at social event with people my age — and younger — it was the talk of the night. I mean, we had groups of up to eight people in political discussions. And there was a couple of us there who said, we've never seen anything like it. And you know what? It was really nice, for everyone to voice their opinion and maturely discuss the future of this country. Even up here in Old Crow, we've had a lot of people at the advance polls. A lot of people care, and a lot of people are worried about the future of this country. Over Facebook, social media, in the streets, in social parties, I mean, this is something that will be imprinted on me. It's a nail-biter.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/panel-young-first-nations-voters-in-yukon-reflect-on-federal-election-campaign-1.3275301>

Nunavut Conservative candidate raises spectre of long-gun registry

Leona Aglukkaq says Liberals will bring it back; Hunter Tootoo says claim is 'completely false'

By Sima Sahar Zerehi, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 16, 2015 6:28 PM CT Last Updated: Oct 16, 2015 6:28 PM CT



'This is an effort to deceive Liberal supporters,' said Nunavut's Liberal candidate Hunter Tootoo. 'Let me be clear it's completely false. I've discussed this with our leader and he has confirmed we will not bring back the long-gun registry.' (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

With only a few days left until the election, Nunavut's Conservative candidate is digging up the debate over Canada's now-defunct long-gun registry.

"The Liberals have said they're going to support bringing back some type of gun registry," said Conservative candidate Leona Aglukkaq at CBC Nunavut's all candidates forum. "That will make our hunters' lives more difficult."

Aglukkaq said this several times during the forum, and posted [a note on her Facebook page about it Thursday](#).

Nunavut's Liberal candidate Hunter Tootoo says the claim is not true.

"I've heard that the Conservative party has a radio ad suggesting that we'll bring back the long-gun registry," he said.



'The long-gun registry, as it was, was a failure and I'm not going to resuscitate that,' said Justin Trudeau. (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

"This is an effort to deceive Liberal supporters. Let me be clear it's completely false. I've discussed this with our leader and he has confirmed we will not bring back the long-gun registry."

The debate dates back to 1995 when Jean Chrétien's Liberal government introduced legislation that required registration of all firearms, including shotguns and rifles.

Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., filed a lawsuit against the federal government in 2002, arguing that the gun registry went against an understanding that Inuit in Nunavut would be able to hunt, trap and fish without licensing or fees.

In July 2004, Justice Robert Kilpatrick granted a temporary injunction protecting Inuit from the federal firearms registry until a lawsuit filed by Nunavut's land claims organization went to court the following year. The judge concluded that requiring Inuit to register their guns could interfere with their traditional way of life.

[The long-gun registry was scrapped in 2012](#) by the Conservatives.

Last week, Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau announced that, if elected, the Liberals would sign the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty, which covers conventional weaponry.

The pledge is part of the Liberal plan to get handguns and assault weapons off the streets.

The Liberal platform says the plan would "require purchasers of firearms to show a licence when they buy a gun, and require all sellers of firearms to confirm that the licence is valid before completing the sale."

It would also "require firearms vendors to keep records of all firearms inventory and sales to assist police in investigating firearms trafficking and other gun crimes."

'Like mixing apples and oranges'

In an emailed statement, Aglukkaq said requiring vendors to keep records of firearms sales constitutes a registry.

"Your platform is vague and misleading to Nunavummiut," Aglukkaq addresses Tootoo in the statement. "You are promising another wasteful registry with a different name."

Tootoo says the Liberals have stressed that they would not reintroduce the long-gun registry.

"There's nothing about being part of a national registry in our platform," says Tootoo.

"It's like mixing apples and oranges. The treaty is about the international arms trade and being able to track and prevent the sale of weapons in conflict zones, not about an Inuit hunter's right to be able to buy a gun."

Tootoo adds that Trudeau has promised to honour the Land Claims Agreement, which guarantees Inuit hunting rights in the settlement area.

"I'll continue to advocate for those rights under the Land Claim Agreement," says Tootoo.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/nunavut-conservative-candidate-raises-spectre-of-long-gun-registry-1.3275457>

Top 5 Indigenous issues all Canadians should care about

[National News](#) | October 17, 2015 by [Trina Roache](#)



APTN National News

As Canadians head to the polls Monday, there's a push to make sure Indigenous voters are among them.

The Assembly of First Nations has identified 51 ridings where the First Nations, Metis or Inuit vote can make a difference.

The AFN highlighted on its website where the parties stand on Indigenous issues so people can cast their ballots accordingly.

[2015 Election commitments for First Nations](#)

Aboriginal leaders, lawyers, activists and academics say Canadians in all 338 ridings across the country should do the same.

Social media is peppered with complaints that key indigenous issues haven't featured in mainstream media and debates.

Inequalities in healthcare, education, the economy.



The importance of social justice and treaty rights.

“We assume different types of knowledge because we’ve lived it,” said Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society. “And I think we have to be better communicators and better educators of non-Aboriginal people so they can understand why these situations have evolved. And then invite them into the solution.”

“You can’t build a country without your indigenous peoples,” said Todd Russell, an Inuit leader in Labrador. “When we’re weak, this country is weak. And when we’re strong, this country is strong.”

Here are the issues all Canadians should care about.

Healthcare:

“We need to call for equality being the floor not the ceiling.” Cindy Blackstock, First Nations Child & Family Caring Society

Healthcare is a basic right of all Canadians. Cindy Blackstock said it might come as a shock to the average person that Indigenous people do not have equal access to the same care.



Cindy Blackstock

In a release this week, the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada wrote, “Quality health care is out of reach for many Aboriginal Canadians.”

A complicated “patchwork” of policies, legislation and agreements...cultural barriers according to the Association, have created barriers to equitable access to health care and services.

That’s reflected in sobering statistics when it comes to physical and mental health.

- *Suicide rates are five to seven times higher for First Nations youth than for non-Aboriginal youth.*
- *Disproportionate rates of tuberculosis at 26.4 times the rate of Canadian-born non-Aboriginal people.*
- *Type 2 diabetes is now considered to have reached “epidemic” levels*

“Many people I talk to have taken on government supported stereotypes that First Nations’ children on reserve are getting more,” said Blackstock. “And that’s why they couldn’t understand why things weren’t getting any better.”

Blackstock took the Canadian government before the Human Rights Tribunal over its discriminatory policies.

“The federal government has been under-funding these services in the order of 30 per cent for 148 years,” said Blackstock. “And that’s why we see all these inequalities for kids and then it makes sense for the average Canadian.”

A decision from the Tribunal is expected in the next few months.

In the meantime, Blackstock hasn’t heard the party leaders address key indigenous issues in this election. “I think the silence of the leaders is actually an endorsement of the continued racial discrimination,” she said.

Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day is urging Canadian voters to “reject the current conservative policy approaches that perpetuate institutional racism.”

In the Chief of Ontario's "Top 5 Priorities for First Nations," the Indigenous healthcare crisis sits at number one.



Isadore Day

"It is simply unacceptable that Indian Status is an indicator of health, poverty, and education in Canada," said Day. "First Nations have worse health and educational outcomes, worse housing, and less access to critical services than any other population in Canada. This is entirely due to federal funding practices, policies and discriminatory legislation – some of which has been on the books since 1876."

"These inequalities put a red hot poker stick into that Canadian identity," said Blackstock.

Aside from the steep social cost, equality is good for the economy.

Blackstock points to research that shows a traumatic childhood, like living in poverty, in overcrowded houses, with mental health or addiction issues in the family, leads to costly healthcare problems for adults.

"It's all predicted by what happened to you as a little kid, so the better we can make childhood, the more money we're going to save downstream," said Blackstock. "And that's why the World Health Organization says for every dollar we spend on a kid, the taxpayers save seven dollars down the line."

Economy:

"All Canadians benefit, when we are more prosperous." Todd Russell, President of NunatuKavut

In Labrador, the Southern Inuit of NunatuKavut have been fighting for recognition of their Aboriginal identity and land claim for 25 years.

Russell wants to make it an election issue. A land claim brings in federal dollars to a region struggling economically. And that's good for everyone in Labrador.



Todd Russell

“We’re always judged by what we can do for those who have the least,” said Russell. And adds, as a country, Canadians shouldn’t accept poverty that defines so many Indigenous communities.

Number two on Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day’s list of priorities: Continuing abject poverty that creates systemic issues in First Nations.

“On Election Day, voters should ask themselves if they are prepared to support another generation of discrimination, another generation of youth stuck in poverty, or another decade of lost opportunities,” said Day.

And the economies of First Nations matter.

In Cape Breton, the Mi’kmaw community of Membertou is an economic success.

With its hotel, business park and convention centre, it employs seven hundred people, many from off the reserve.

Not far away, Eskasoni is the largest Mi’kmaw reserve with a population of 4,000.

“General mainstream should care because we’re all part of the community,” said Tuma Young, an assistant professor at the Unama’ki College at Cape Breton University.

“Eskasoni is such an economic force that impacts Sydney. People spend money off reserve. Cape Breton depends on what happens in Eskasoni.”

On a larger scale, First Nations are key to the larger Canadian economy, says a lawyer specializing in Aboriginal Title and Treaty Rights.

“The proposed pipelines that go west or south or east,” said Bruce McIvor, “those are indigenous issues. If non-indigenous people expect these to be resolved, to have major resource extraction projects move forward, we have to come to grips with indigenous issues across the country.”



Bruce McIvor

Environmental activist Clayton Thomas-Muller said the platforms of the main political parties “set Canada on a crash course with First Nations.”

“If our economic model continues on oil,” said Thomas-Muller, “that’s at odds with constitutional protection of indigenous rights to hunt and trap within our territories. Nobody is addressing the jurisdictional gray area that exist between title, sovereignty and rights of First Nation’s and where that sits between goals of extractive industry.”

Treaty Rights:

“We’re not going anywhere, this is our land. We’re here to stay.” Clayton Thomas-Muller, Environmental activist

The 338 electoral ridings across the country overlay a patchwork of Treaties that make up modern Canada.

“These are not historical, but instead are living documents,” said Bruce McIvor. “They need to be renewed. Respected. They need to be implemented and that takes work.”

For the Canadian public, treaty rights might only come to fore when there’s conflict; images of protests, burning tires, clashes with police on the evening news.



Clayton Thomas-Muller

“But that’s the last resort for most First Nations,” he said. “That symbolizes how important these issues are and that they take these things seriously to step up in that way when confronted with force. Non-indigenous Canadians should take that as wake up call. One, these issues are fundamentally important to the country. And two, the government is not doing its job on these issues in a respectful, principled, honourable manner.”

In Elsipogtog, the fight over fracking brought the Mi’kmaq together with their Acadian neighbors and environmental groups. A coalition based on the common goal to protect the water.

That new expression of what it means to be Treaty partners pops up in similar scenes across the country, like the fight against Enbridge in British Columbia.

“What really binds them is locality,” said McIvor. “Hydroelectricity is a good example. The benefits flow south, the negative effects are experienced by the people close to the development. And a lot of non-indigenous groups are more aware now that in order to have a better chance of being successful in opposing a particular development, they’re better off supporting an indigenous group that has constitutional rights they can rely on.”

Thomas-Muller sees an awakening at a grassroots level that has yet to reach federal politics.

“There is a spirit of change that I see in these streets, especially with young Indigenous people who are leading social change,” said Thomas-Muller. “Forestry, pipelines, mining. We see this incredible Indigenous resurgence and it’s a real tragedy that the candidates haven’t addressed it, especially in the wake of Idle No More.”

He calls the lack of debate in this federal election on Treaty rights a “disservice to voters.”

Education:

“Kids are the best investment any society can make and we’re not investing in these children in fact we’re under investing.” Cindy Blackstock, First Nations Child & Family Caring Society

The Liberals have promised \$2.6 billion over four years for First Nations education. The NDP promise \$4.8 billion over 8 years.

Assistant Professor Tuma Young points out that money spread over 600-plus First Nations across Canada over several years, doesn’t add up to what’s needed.

Infrastructure. New schools. Resources for teachers. Culturally relevant curriculum.

“I don’t dismiss these promises, but generally speaking it’s the status quo or even less,” said Tuma Young. “We’ve been talking about education since the 1980s. I remember there was a protest train, students went to Ottawa to protest cuts to education then.”



Tuma Young

With an exploding young indigenous population, he said all of Canada benefits from an investment in education.

“Mainstream schools are closing in rural areas,” said Young. “Schools in First Nation Communities are busting at the seams and universities are starting to eye the First Nation schools as a tuition base.”

But the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students is well documented. From grades to high school graduation rates to who goes to university.

“There needs to be someone in a leadership position that says, you know, we have got to step up to the plate, we’ve got to end this,” said Blackstock. “Maybe it means we’re going to go into a deficit for a couple of years. But these people have been in a deficit for 148 years and it’s the least we can do.”

Thomas-Muller says Canadians themselves need to be educated on the Indigenous reality against “racist stereotypes.”

“Canadian need to understand that there’s a well-funded campaign to label Indigenous people as anti-development, non-tax paying free loaders,” said Thomas-Muller.

Instead, he points out the incredible potential of indigenous youth.

“This is the fastest rising labour demographic in the country. This generation of young native people that are graduating is the most empowered, educated generation since colonization.”

Advocates say an investment now will pay off in the long run.

“I think our kids are worth the money,” said Blackstock. “And I think most Canadians would say that too.”

Social Justice:

“If we ensure our women are uplifted than everybody’s uplifted.” Beverley Jacobs, Former President, Native Women’s Association

Missing and murdered Indigenous women and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report have captured headlines this year. And earned promises from the NDP, Liberals and Green Party.

A national inquiry into MMIW. Implementation of the TRC’s 94 recommendations.

But many want the platitudes backed up with policies: a plan to move forward.



Bev Jacobs

Last month, Mi’kmaw elder Albert Marshall went to see the Witness Blanket, a 12-metre long art installation that pieces together the tangible evidence of residential schools to tell the story of trauma and cultural loss.

“What I’m really hoping is this wonderful piece of art will somehow resonate in the eyes of the policymakers, like the politicians, the government,” said Marshall. “To take another step forward and not just use words, but put resources together for us to be able to begin this journey. This journey of reconciliation.”

Reconciliation requires partnership, says Beverley Jacobs, former President of the Native Women’s Association.

“My elders always taught me is that we’re always the one educating them,” said Jacobs. “So that’s part of our responsibility but now it’s up to them also. They have to become educated about who we are and about that mutual understanding and relationship.”

Jacobs, the lead researcher on the No More Stolen Sisters report over a decade ago, said Indigenous women have born “the brunt of colonial genocidal policies.” But she sees a growing awareness of issues around missing and murdered Indigenous women.

“These issues have root causes, rooted in Canada’s fabric,” said Thomas-Muller. “Addressing these things are all part of Canada’s identity. It creates a serious moral dilemma, we can’t say no, that’s a serious block to reconciliation.”

Jacobs hopes Canadian voters don’t put the Conservatives back in power.

She met Harper during her time as head of NWAC, when he offered up an apology over residential schools. Jacobs calls him “the most racist person I’ve ever met,” and doubts true reconciliation can happen under his leadership.

Social justice is a broad heading. And the issues are interwoven; education, poverty, racism, violence, over representation in prisons, high numbers of kids in care.

“We assume different types of knowledge because we’ve lived it,” said Blackstock. “And I think we have to be better communicators and better educators of non-Aboriginal people so they can understand why these situation have evolved. And then invite them into the solution.”

Blackstock would like to see every Member of Parliament elected on October 19th get a crash course on Indigenous issues so government can move forward with understanding.

In the meantime, who makes the trip to Ottawa is up to the Canadian public.

The hope is that Indigenous issues will matter when they cast their ballots.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/10/17/top-5-indigenous-issues-all-canadians-should-care-about/>

Alberta First Nations look to make history mobilizing vote in upcoming federal election

[National News](#) | October 16, 2015 by [Brandi Morin](#)



(Attendees listen to candidate pitches at Maskwacis First Nation forum Wednesday. Brandi Morin/APTN photo.)

Brandi Morin

APTN National News

For the first time in its history an Alberta First Nation is going to take part in a federal election.

The Tsuu T'ina Nation near Calgary established its first ever polling station at the Grey Eagle Resort.

Tsuu T'ina spokesperson Kevin Littlelight said the momentum started to build when they decided to get engaged during the last provincial election.

The motivating factor, he said, was because the previous Progressive Conservative government in Alberta was what he described as not very Aboriginal friendly.

"We could smell change in the air," said Littlelight. "The provincial election was the biggest turnout of Aboriginal voters ever. The push was for change for Aboriginal people and for Albertans, and we were a part of that change."

Across Alberta it appears First Nations are becoming more involved than ever and plan to show it on Monday before polls close.

Maskwacis First Nation in central Alberta held its first ever federal candidates open forum at Samson Cree Nation's Howard Buffalo Memorial Center earlier this week.

Throughout the evening approximately 100 people showed up to listen to pitches from the Liberal and NDP candidates, the Conservative and Green candidates didn't attend.

Tara Cutarm, one of the event organizers, said she was impressed by the turnout and noticed a significant number of youth in attendance.

“It made me feel hopeful,” said Cutarm. “And grateful seeing the youth be so interested in attending the forum. It gave me pride in the fact that there are youth caring at that young age not only for themselves, but for all of us...I am hoping First Nation’s youth storm the polls and take this country back because it’s their future that’s going to be impacted.”

In Enoch Cree Nation, directly west of Edmonton, elder Irene Morin said they are also working hard to ensure high voter turnout there. Morin said she took the initiative to make arrangements with the nation’s transportation coordinator to use the local school buses to transport voters to the polling station at the local arena and is using a specialized bus for elders. The organizing of transporting community members to vote during an election is also a first for Enoch.

“This time we want to make sure that the voters get out and vote,” said Morin who added that she’s never seen a push like this for Aboriginal engagement in a federal election before.

“I think the main reason is that First Nations want to lend their support to a party other than the Conservatives...I think that’s the feel all over.”

Morin plans to spend most of Monday volunteering at the polling station.

Ermineskin Cree Nation Chief Randy Ermineskin said getting people to polling stations has been a problem in the past. This election has encouraged Ermineskin to be more innovative in finding ways around those kinds of challenges.

Council unanimously agreed for the band to organize rides to and from the polling station with the community’s passenger van to those without transportation. This kind of action to help usher people to the polls is unparalleled.

“If we want to engage them (community members) we need to provide access to transportation,” said Ermineskin. “It’s going to be a busy day for everybody that’s going to be involved and we’re working on the logistics of what that’s going to look like.”

Ermineskin said he’s noticing something stirring in the community in regards to Monday’s election and there’s a sense of urgency being felt to participate in choosing Canada’s leadership.

“I think because talk of our issues are falling on deaf ears,” said Ermineskin who will be encouraging other Maskwacis leadership to rally their members to vote in the coming days. “It’s time we start to rise up and let people know we need to participate.”

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/10/16/alberta-first-nations-look-to-make-history-mobilizing-vote-in-upcoming-federal-election/>

Standing for the North

Relying on her record

Election campaigns are long on policy and promises but Leona Aglukkaq helps people with things they'll actually remember her for



No need to carry a big stick

October 17, 2015 - 7:55pm - By Brian Pehora

Didn't catch our previous interviews? Listen to them below.

Canadians are heading to the polls on October 19. We're profiling the candidates standing in the Northern ridings in order to get a sense of what the issues facing the region are.

After our initial interview with [Spencer Rocchi](#), the candidate for the Greens, we followed up with conversations with [Hunter Tootoo](#), who is standing for the Liberals, and [Jack Anawak](#), of the NDP.

Our final profile before the election on Monday is of Leona Aglukkaq, the Conservative incumbent.

Ms Aglukkaq is seeking re-election in Nunavut for the Conservatives, the party of incumbent PM Stephen Harper. After winning the seat in 2008, she became the first Inuk cabinet member, taking on the health portfolio. She was also environment minister, minister for the Canadian Northern Development Agency and was chair of the [Arctic Council](#). Prior to becoming an MP she served as a municipal and a territorial councillor.

As the incumbent, Ms Aglukkaq is standing on her record. A statement outlining her platform states that it “builds on Leona’s previous record of delivering for Nunavummiut”. Protecting the Inuit way of life is a central plank in the platform. She points to her support for eliminating the long gun registry, a federal database to keep

track of rifles and shotguns, and vows to continue to defend Inuit seal and polar-bear hunting rights.

To promote further development, Ms Aglukkaq wants to make “smart investments” while maintaining a “low-tax plan”. Among her proposed investments: improving internet infrastructure and working with the neighbouring province of Manitoba to expand the electrical grid into the territory as a way to ease its reliance on diesel, currently its only source of power.

Ms Aglukkaq wants Nunavummiut to “continue to get access to housing and affordable food” and, like the other candidates, wants to review and increase funding for Nutrition North, a food-subsidy programme, in order to make food more affordable. Ms Aglukkaq was criticised, and later apologised, for reading a newspaper in the House of Commons in December 2014 debate about how to address the problem of people scrounging for food in the dump in Rankin Inlet.

The platform statement points out that the Conservative budget of 2015 allots over C\$2 billion (\$1.55 billion) a year for four years to support for housing all of Canada. The Nunavut Housing Corporation estimates that C\$1 billion needs to be spent in Nunavut to address the housing shortfall.

Among her accomplishments, Ms Aglukkaq can point to the Conservative government’s “historical levels of infrastructure investments” in Nunavut. Indeed, two big-ticket items for Nunavut were [announced](#) just before the election was called: a small-craft harbour for Pond Inlet and port improvements for Iqaluit.

She also stands by her record of working with the territory to “strengthen access to services for mental health, to fight TB and children’s dental health”, however the 2015 Conservative budget maintains Nunavut’s funding at last year’s levels. If re-elected, the Conservatives say they would increase funding for healthcare, as well as for education.

Kent Driscoll, an Iqaluit-based journalist, points out that while Nunavut’s MP has many critics her popularity among her constituents comes from “good ground game”: helping people negotiate Ottawa’s bureaucratic hurdles for getting things like passports and unemployment insurance.

This, he maintains, is what voters remember when they mark their ballots.

Look for our analysis of the election on Monday in our Week Ahead.

Direct Link: <http://arcticjournal.com/politics/1903/relying-her-record>

Canada's indigenous people raise voices as youth activism surges

With the majority of the country's aboriginal population under 25, young people are embracing indigenous languages as representatives seek to make cultural issues a focus of the coming election



First Nations protesters with the Idle No More movement demonstrate in Toronto. Photograph: Steve Russell/Toronto Star via Getty Images

[Jessica Murphy](#) in Ottawa

Sunday 18 October 2015 12.00 BST Last modified on Wednesday 21 October 2015 16.52 BST

Quinn Meawasige says he has spent his life walking with “one foot in a moccasin and one foot in a sneaker”.

The indigenous activist and youth council representative with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Meawasige learned to balance both those worlds when he discovered his Aboriginal roots and heritage in a self-imposed stint in rehab as a struggling teenager.

Meawasige, now 21, is far from alone among young indigenous Canadians who are forging a new path paved with old traditions.

There are over 1.4 million aboriginal people in [Canada](#), with the majority of the population now under 25.

More than 45% of on-reserve youth say learning a First Nations language is very important to them, and just over half of them can understand or speak a First Nations language.

A 2014 report from the British Columbia Language Initiative – which seeks to revitalize the province's First Nations languages – found that the number of semi-fluent speakers had risen by nearly 10% since 2010.

The embrace of the language comes as Canada's aboriginal youth are increasingly finding their voice in culture and politics.

“As an aboriginal youth of this generation, we’re saying culture, language has to be on the forefront of our approach to exercising our rights, the healing that needs to happen within the community,” he said.

“It’s a wave of young people who want to retain their language, who want to contribute to Western society but also make sure they’re rooted and grounded in their culture,” said Meawasige.

Indigenous activism has taken many forms, from the electronic powwow music of A Tribe Called Red to the flash mobs of the Idle No More movement.

Ashley Callingbull made history this year by becoming the first Aboriginal woman to be crowned Mrs Universe – and then calling on First Nations people to vote Conservative prime minister Stephen Harper out of office in the 19 October federal election, criticizing what she called his government’s adversarial approach to First Nations.



[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Pinterest](#)

Mrs Universe, Ashley Callingbull, speaks in September. Photograph: Mark Blinch / Reuters/REUTERS

Brian Maracle, program coordinator of the Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa Mohawk language school outside Toronto, said he’s witnessed the shift since the school opened in 1999.

“Sixteen years ago, our typical student was a middle-aged grandmother,” he said. “And now our typical student is someone in their 20s, maybe even a teenager.”

And he’s noticed his younger students are using the language in new ways.

“They want to be part of this new culture with social media and rap and things like that. They want to do it their way. I’m really surprised at the determination of these young people to use the language and use the language only. They want to function entirely – in our case Mohawk – that’s how they want to live their lives.”

Still, of Canada’s roughly 60 indigenous languages, only Cree, Ojibwa and Inuktituk – an Inuit language – are currently predicted to survive.

Khelsilem, 26, a Vancouver-based indigenous artist and educator, is among the young language revitalization activists trying to keep his own Squamish language from dying out.

He founded the Skwomesh Language Academy, an adult immersion program geared towards spreading the language, which is at the very brink of extinction. That included a pilot project funded through grassroots donations that allowed Khelsilem to live with two other indigenous youth for nine months in an immersion “language house” where they immersed themselves in speaking Squamish.

Khelsilem’s hunger for the language was first stoked by his.

She lost her ability to speak Squamish in the residential school system – a network of boarding schools for Canada’s aboriginal people that lasted for more than a century and was described by a government Truth and Reconciliation Commission as “[a period of cultural genocide](#)”.

Victims of the policy of forced assimilation were first punished for speaking their own language and then found themselves unable to communicate with their elders – or pass on their language to their own children.

Advertisement

Khelsilem’s grandmother lost her own language but insisted that he listen to old cassette tapes of people speaking Squamish.

Khelsilem links the current interest in learning Aboriginal languages among his peers to the political activism of the 1970s and 80s when social justice movements inspired Canada’s aboriginal population to embrace their own identity after decades of what he calls “internalized racism”.

“So you get these kids who are raised by those parents and they started looking around and saying, OK – what do we have that is ours? What do we have that we can claim as ours and we can also be proud of and learn and practice? And language was one of those,” he said.

“I think that’s where a lot of it comes from – this very strong history of our people starting to feel proud of ourselves again and becoming more visible and becoming stronger and becoming more active.”

Aboriginal groups are also pushing to bring culture and language issues to the forefront of Canada’s federal election campaign.

This summer, the AFN presented its policy priorities to the federal parties, which included a demand for more funding for language revitalization and the establishment of a National First Nations Languages Institute.

So far, only the centrist Liberal Party has made a specific campaign promise to directly increase languages funding, though the other major parties have made promises that would boost funding to culture and education.

The Canadian government spends about \$9m a year on two aboriginal language preservation programs, a financial commitment critics argue falls short of the need.

But Hjalmer Wenstob, AFN national youth council co-chair, said members of this generation aren't waiting for someone to bring their culture and language to them: they've gone in search of it.

"The truth is our youth can say I love you and they mean it, and they know what that means - and they can say it in their language," he said.

"It's a generation of such movement, a generation of such change."

Direct Link: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/18/canada-indigenous-youth-activists-first-nations>

Winning the indigenous vote means acknowledging disparity in Canada

Closing gap between Indigenous Peoples and rest of Canada crucial election issue: Max FineDay

By Max FineDay, [for CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 18, 2015 6:00 AM ET Last Updated: Oct 18, 2015 9:24 AM ET



'In this election,' says Max FineDay, 'parties have an opportunity to gain the support of many Indigenous people who are desperate for the chance of something more.' (Brad Crowfoot)

We're facing a deficit in Canada. It's not a deficit in the government's books, but a deficit in potential.

Canada values and commits itself to compassion, fairness and equity, but for too long it has failed to apply those values, the foundation of our just society, to Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous populations face a life expectancy five to seven years shorter than other Canadians. They have poorer health and are less likely to hold a post-secondary degree. Indigenous women are five times more likely to be murdered. A young indigenous man is more likely to end up in jail than walk across the stage at his high school graduation.

I was at a public lecture recently where those statistics were presented. At the end of the lecture, a non-indigenous woman said, wiping tears from her eyes, "If what you're saying is true, if this is really happening, then it's the biggest embarrassment for our entire country."

She's right.

Closing the gap

In an election where the battleground for votes seems to be concentrating on Jane & Joe Canadian, it's no surprise that parties aren't talking about fulfilling treaty promises to Indigenous Peoples or recognizing and respecting aboriginal rights and title.

Candidates are not acknowledging the extreme poverty and disparity that Indigenous Peoples face in education, housing, safety; or committing to finally, once and for all, ending those disparities and ensuring Indigenous Peoples the basic rights and freedoms that Canadians enjoy.

Many have been right to criticize parties for only speaking to indigenous issues when speaking to Indigenous Peoples.

The economic and social disparities that exist have a profound impact on Canada's economy, international reputation and future.

As Rex Murphy said not long after the Truth & Reconciliation Commission released its 94 calls to action, "This shouldn't just be an election issue, it should be the election issue."

After much pressure, Tom Mulcair, Justin Trudeau, and Elizabeth May agreed to participate in town hall forums hosted by APTN. It's a step short of the full debate on the state of Indigenous Canada that many were calling for.

But it provided one last opportunity for the parties to show Indigenous Peoples that they are committed to a relationship built on foundations of respect, justice, and recognition. It also provided an opportunity to show Canadians that closing the gap between Indigenous peoples and the rest of the country is the just, as well as economical, thing to do.

Winning indigenous votes

Now, more than ever, parties must work harder to earn indigenous votes. Though traditionally Indigenous Peoples have had a lower voter turnout, this election has galvanized a generation looking to build on and honour the work of our ancestors in rebuilding our nations.

Indigenous youth are immersed in a world that's continually changing technologically, socially and politically. And we're seeing that change manifesting in a higher engagement in electoral politics.

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit are the fastest growing community in Canada. In this election, parties have an opportunity to gain the support of many indigenous people who are desperate for the chance of something more, the chance of returning to the original promise in treaty — a promise of prosperity for all peoples.

And that is a vision to which all of Canada can aspire.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/winning-indigenous-vote-means-closing-the-gap-1.3275901>

New Brock chancellor wants to build bridges

By [Grant LaFleche](#), The Standard

Sunday, October 18, 2015 5:33:46 EDT PM



Shirley Cheechoo. Photo by Brock University.

The federal election has in some ways been a campaign about everything.

Whether Canada is in a recession or not. Mike Duffy. Syrian refugees. The niqab. Even Rob Ford was eventually thrown into the mix.

But one item remains invisible as Canadians head to the ballot box — aboriginal issues.

It's something that frustrates Brock University's newly installed chancellor, Shirley Cheechoo, who has seen first-hand the problems faced by Canada's aboriginal youth and apathy from the nation's political leadership.

"I had donated to the federal Liberal campaign," Cheechoo said in a Sunday morning interview. "Later on they came back to me to ask if I would donate again. So I said, 'Listen, I will donate again to your party if you answer me one question. I want to know from Justin Trudeau what his plans are to help aboriginal youth in Canada.'"

Cheechoo said she never got an answer.

"I never heard from them, so I never donated again," she said.

The fact that aboriginal issues have not been discussed during this 11-week election campaign, particularly ones facing youths living on First Nation reserves, leaves many young people feeling disconnected from the political process, she said.

However, Cheechoo said, the problem runs deeper than just one federal election.

"You see it in just about any First Nations government you can find in this country," she said.

"Every time aboriginal politicians run for office, they say the same thing. They always say they stand with the youth and will help the youth. But there is never any action.

"Young aboriginal people do not see any politician standing with them. Why would they trust a white politician when their own leaders aren't helping them?"

Cheechoo, a well-known Canadian actor and writer, was officially installed as the university's new chancellor during a graduation ceremony Saturday morning, replacing outgoing chancellor Ned Goodman who was given an honorary degree as doctor of laws during the event.

A respected artist and residential school survivor, Cheechoo told Brock graduates aboriginal Canadians often feel left on the fringes of the national discussion.

"I come from a background where when we spoke, our voices were not heard. Today we are still marginalized, excluded and devalued," she said during her speech.

Cheechoo said in the interview she hopes she can start to change that by fostering a bridge between the university and aboriginal youths, particularly those living on reserves who are often wary of leaving home.

“They have the talent and the opportunity, but they are afraid to leave,” she said. “They have a hard time in the city and don’t know how to get along.”

She said she went through the same thing as a young woman, when she left the reserve to attend classes at the University of Toronto.

“I know what it’s like and how overwhelming it is,” she said. “I couldn’t cope at the time either, and so I left U of T and went back home.”

Although she retreated from urban life, when she got back to the reserve Cheechoo ended up as disillusioned as she was in the city.

“It was very sad to come home and realize so clearly there was nothing there for me as young person. There were no opportunities,” she said.

“That was back in 1985, and the situation is the same today.”

She wants to use her position as Brock chancellor to build a link between the school and her own Weengushk Film Institute on Manitoulin Island in northern Ontario.

“I would like to see our students come to Brock, and Brock students spend time at the institute,” she said.

Cheechoo said aboriginal youths are not just taught the art of filmmaking at the institute. They learn everything that comes with producing a movie.

“They are taught about the business, about script writing, about budgets and managing money. They are taught everything,” she said.

Those tools are not just useful in making films, she said, but are skills needed to give aboriginal youths confidence to pursue their dreams. Being able to spend time at Brock University would enhance those skills, she said, and show the youths they can make it outside the reserve.

“They really need that confidence. What happens now is a young person might want to be a surgeon, but their friends are going to school in North Bay. So they will say, ‘Well, then I will go North Bay.’ But if they do, they cannot follow their dreams.”

To watch Cheechoo address go [Brock University's website](http://www.brocku.ca/2015/10/18/new-brock-chancellor-wants-to-build-bridges).

Direct Link: <http://www.stcatharinesstandard.ca/2015/10/18/new-brock-chancellor-wants-to-build-bridges>

Canada Heads to Polls; Indigenous Leaders Rally Voters, Hope for Change

[Cara McKenna](#)

10/19/15

Canadians are heading to the polls to elect a new government today, and hopes are high among indigenous leaders that First Nations, Métis and Inuit will join them—and topple Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his Conservative Party from power.

With more indigenous candidates running than ever before—most of them on the Liberal and New Democratic Party (NDP) tickets—they have the potential to influence results in a number of ridings, or districts.

Just three days before Canada's October 19 election, voter-registration organizer Cara Currie Hall stood on the steps of the Vancouver Art Gallery in front of dozens of people for one last attempt to rally possible voters.

"This is your weapon," she said, raising an open hand. "You don't need to be confrontational and you don't need to protest. You go to the polls and you make an X. Throw your spear down."

It was one of the final Rock the Indigenous Vote rallies that Hall and others have been holding across the country in hopes of—in her words—"indigenizing the election."

Supporters have included Wab Kinew and the recently crowned Mrs. Universe Ashley Callingbull, who has been using her platform to talk about issues such as Canada's epidemic of missing and murdered aboriginal women. The voting power could be formidable.

"The indigenous population in Canada comprises about 4.5 percent of the total population. We have 1.2 million eligible indigenous voters," Hall said. "So we are going to exercise our right and our responsibility to vote and when we do, we're going to change how Parliament looks."

Hall, a strategist from Canada who now lives in the U.S., was previously involved in mobilizing the Native American vote before Barack Obama was elected in 2009. In the end, she said, the indigenous vote came out for Obama four to one.

In Canada there has been consistently lower voter turnout among indigenous communities compared to the general population, according to Elections Canada. Research shows that numbers have fluctuated from year to year, though turnout on

reserves has been particularly low at an average of 44 percent between 2004 and 2011, lagging about 17 percent behind the national average.

Elections Canada doesn't yet have any numbers for this election, but Hall said she has noticed a big jump in engagement and excitement over voting.

"There was certainly an increase in aboriginal ... people who voted in the [last U.S.] election, and it was really apparent," Hall said. "And we're seeing that today. We're seeing how engaged aboriginal people are, and we're also hearing the parties respond."

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs called it one of the most important elections in Canadian history.

"We're going to witness a change in this country," he said. "We've witnessed the absolute hostility and adversarial posture of [Prime Minister Stephen Harper's] government over the last ten years."

Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Chief Perry Bellegarde agreed that the Conservatives' platform—which includes promised investments in post-secondary education and limited follow-up on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action—doesn't do enough for First Nations. The AFN released the statement targeting the Conservatives following a general list of four major parties' "commitments of interest to First Nations." NDP leader Tom Mulcair and Liberal leader Justin Trudeau stand to win against Harper.

Other indigenous leaders have similar critiques. Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day, too, has urged voters to reject the country's current Conservative policy. Former B.C. AFN regional chief Jody Wilson-Raybould, who is running for the Liberals in the Vancouver Granville riding, said she went into mainstream politics because she felt ignored by Canada.

"We worked hard as First Nations to forge thoughtful solutions and bring them forward to this current government," she said. "And we sat down across from this current government and found that our voices weren't being heard."

Wilson-Raybould is one of more than 50 First Nations, Metis and Inuit candidates who are running in this election, according to the CBC, a number that's up from 31 in 2011.

The majority of those candidates are running on NDP and Liberal tickets, but there are also about a dozen candidates between the Greens and Conservatives.

Regardless of what party indigenous people are voting or running for, Hall said, they are getting involved in droves, and she believes Canada "is just not going to be the same" after this election.

“We have potentially the ability to elect over 50 Members of Parliament, and the ability to impact over 100 ridings in the country,” she said. “There’s polling stations located right on reservations, right in native communities, they’re coming. This is the awakening.”

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/10/19/canada-heads-polls-indigenous-leaders-rally-voters-hope-change-162125>

Arctic whistle stop

Our focus topics for October 19-25: A symbol with limited power – Brussels’s distaste for seals – The gathering of the council



October 19, 2015 - 10:20am - By The Arctic Journal

*Each Monday, we give a brief run-down of some of the events and issues affecting the Arctic we'll be paying attention to in the coming week. If you have an event you think should be included next week, please **contact us**.*

Canadians will be going to the polls to elect representatives in 338 ridings, or electoral districts, today. Though an Arctic state, Northern issues received barely a mention in the campaign.

That is due to the fact that Nunavut, which has all its territory in the Arctic, has just one seat in the House of Commons. Four or five others have some territory there as well, depending on how 'Arctic' is defined. With most of these areas also thinly populated, it's not surprising that national leaders would rather concentrate on the issues of concern to larger numbers of voters.

Still, when it comes to symbolism, the North remains important for many Canadians, and party leaders were anxious to be seen as being concerned about the region; each leader made a campaign stop in Iqaluit, Nunavut's capital.

Thomas Mulcair, of the left-leaning **New Democratic Party**, used his campaign event to announce a promise of more funding for Nutrition North, a food subsidy program designed to lower the cost of food in Northern communities.

During Justin Trudeau's call, the centrist **Liberal Party** leader, who polls suggest will be come the next PM, also talked about increasing funding for Nutrition North as well as increasing the Northern Living Allowance tax deduction designed to lower the cost of living for northern Canadians.

During his stop, Stephen Harper, the incumbent **Conservative** PM, vowed to expand the junior Canadian Rangers, a sovereignty patrol made up of local volunteers, as well as to provide funding for a John Franklin Expedition visitor centre, in Gjoa Haven.

Later, his party announced a plan to add 40 communities to the list of those eligible to receive Nutrition North subsidies.

With a hotly contested election, every vote will count. For Mr Harper, who has **gone to lengths** to show that Canada's North is a vital part of his party's identity, redefining the North, then, may be the his last chance to conquer it.

Re-sealing the deal

After being approved by the European Parliament on October 1, the EU's wording of the regulation upholding the **Inuit exception** to the European Union's ban on the sale of seal products came into effect yesterday, October 18.

Even with the change, Inuit groups, who consider the rule discriminatory, are likely to keep up their efforts to see it repealed.

The rule change, which states that seal products may enter the market if they were hunted traditionally, primarily for subsistence and done with "due regard to animal welfare", came about as part of an order by the WTO to clarify the original 2010 ban.

Even though many in Brussels have accepted that the ban, and not least the bad publicity it generated, caused "widespread negative portrayals and misunderstandings" about Inuit seal hunting, lawmakers there declined to include efforts to reverse some the damage as part of the revamped measure. Instead the EU agreed only to inform the public about the new regulation.

Two bodies, the Government of Nunavut, the territory's administration, and Greenland's Self-Rule Authority, have been approved under the rules to ensure that sealskins exported to Europe meet the regulations.

Even with the approval, Nuuk remains opposed to the set up, arguing that little has been done to rectify a situation it says has cut seal exports 90%, despite being considered a sustainable resource.

Inuit Sila, a Copenhagen-based lobby group for seal hunters, has also lashed out at the ban, calling for it to “be abolished rather sooner than later”.

With the ban becoming official yesterday, sooner is no longer an option.

Keeping their counsel

Tomorrow, the Arctic Council will convene in Anchorage, Alaska, for the first time since April, when chairmanship of the inter-governmental body was handed over to Washington. Such meetings are a way for representatives from Arctic states, indigenous participants and observers from NGOs and non-Arctic states to discuss work in progress and to bring forward ideas for work related to new issues.

This week’s meeting will include discussions about things like climate change, strengthening Arctic communities and protecting ocean environments.

Such meetings are held behind closed doors, but the press has been invited to a closing briefing on the progress made during the session.

During the April summit, the council’s widely anticipated decision about which new countries it would be added as **observers** was put off, in order to give the organisation the opportunity to re-evaluate observer

This is a process that will get be on the agenda this week, as the council considers ways “to enhance its engagement” with the 30 or so observers.

Direct Link: <http://arcticjournal.com/politics/1905/arctic-whistle-stop>

Indigenous issues were not ballot issues. Again.

In 2014, Harper said an inquiry into murdered and missing indigenous women was “not on his radar.”



Former Northwest Territories premier Stephen Kakfwi, a residential school survivor, holds his granddaughter Sadeya Kakfwi-Scott while standing with the audience at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Ottawa on Tuesday, June 2, 2015 in Ottawa.

By: Danielle Paradis For Metro Published on Sun Oct 18 2015

While shopping for a Halloween costume this week in Edmonton, I found a large cardboard cutout of a white woman dressed in a faux-buckskin “Native American” costume. I can’t say I’m surprised. As much as I ask why this sort of racism is still a thing in 2015, this election campaign has confirmed one reason: despite this being the year of Truth and Reconciliation, neither Canadian citizens nor their politicians seem ready to vote based on the plight of indigenous Canadians.

Let’s consider the debates. At the Globe debate, Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau raised First Nations issues but mainly to say that they had not come up enough. At the Munk debate, NDP Leader Tom Mulcair spoke briefly about food security in the Arctic and the lack of concern the Harper government displayed. Trudeau then brought up Harper’s habit of aligning First Nations groups with terrorists.

Meanwhile, First Nations communities live with boil-water advisories. Meanwhile, Edmonton NDP candidate Aaron Paquette, who is Métis, allegedly had a large phallus scrawled on his family home.

Sissy Thiesson, a Sioux, Cree and Mennonite woman in Edmonton who works as a youth co-ordinator, confronts issues affecting aboriginal people daily. The underlying issue is “intergenerational trauma, where the mistreatment of aboriginal people for decades produced victims who in turn mistreated their families due to what they learned,” she said.

Last week, the Assembly of First Nations graded the NDP, Liberal, Conservative and Green platforms. Among the metrics were commitment to truth and reconciliation, language rights and strengthening First Nations communities. The NDP received full marks for their platform, with the Liberals only slightly behind, owing to their lack of plans for languages. The Conservatives pledged to focus on programs to fight gang violence and on bursaries.

The Truth and Reconciliation report calls for reducing the number of indigenous children in foster care and closing the gap between funding for First Nations communities on and off-reserve. But a legacy of residential schools makes education more complicated than access. As a tool of assimilation, education is a sensitive issue for many indigenous people. Closing the gap on federal funding is an essential step toward healing.

Faux-Indian costumes mirror the faux-concern and lip service paid to indigenous issues.

In 2014, Harper said an inquiry into murdered and missing indigenous women was “not on his radar.” It would seem ‘not-on-the-radar’ is an appropriate way to describe where First Nations people have been in this election.

Danielle Paradis (@Daniparadis) is an Edmonton-based writer and education advocate.

Direct Link: <http://www.metronews.ca/views/opinion/2015/10/18/indigenous-issues-were-not-ballot-issues-again.html>

Youth worker helps offenders vote

By Henrytye Glazebrook, Special To The Starphoenix October 19, 2015



Stephanie Anderson, a crew supervisor with the Saskatoon Indian and Metis friendship Centre, has been helping a group of youth offenders who are over 18 to register to vote and is planning on driving them to polling stations on Monday.

When Stephanie Anderson found out that one of the young offenders she works with had recently turned 18, she asked him if he planned on voting in the federal election.

She was surprised to find out he didn't even know how to register.

Instead of letting the comment go, she helped him register online.

Now, she's planning on personally driving him and a few others to the polls on election day.

"It's a way to make them feel like they're contributing positively to society and let them learn that their voice does make a difference even if it seems like a small one or a misunderstood one," she said.

"If everybody who thought that they weren't being heard voted, things would change."

Anderson is a crew supervisor with the Saskatoon Indian and Metis Friendship Centre's (SIMFC) youth works initiative. The program gives young offenders from all walks of life the opportunity to do community service projects, including snow shovelling,

alleyway cleanup and graffiti removal, with the pay for their work hours put toward restoring the cost of damages to the victims of their crimes. It is the only restitution program of its kind in Saskatoon.

The people Anderson works with vary in age from 13 to 19, with each coming to the SIMFC to put in hours for offences ranging in seriousness from minor vandalism to arson. Though she estimated the number who are of legal voting age at around 15, Anderson said the total number in the centre's case load is closer to 60.

The goal of the program is to give the youths life skills they can put on a resume while showing them how they can contribute positively to society. Anderson thought that casting their ballot would fit in nicely with the experience.

"I'm able to work with them during community service hours and to support them to vote and say, 'Look, your vote does make a difference. The fact that you're putting in your opinion, that's making a difference whether or not you think it is,' " Anderson said.

"They're used to feeling that they're not making a difference. It's a small step, but it's an important step."

So far Anderson has two people firmly committed to casting their ballots on Monday,

with another three she's hopeful she can convince that morning. She's spent some time giving each of them a brief rundown of the different parties' platforms, and plans to use online tools the day of the election to help them gain a better standing of where they land on key issues.

"It's easy to go on bandwagons when you're young, so I want them to be informed," she said.

Anderson hopes getting these young offenders out to vote will spark a greater public interest in them, but also that it will help break what she describes as a self fulfilling cycle in which some reoffend in part because nothing more is expected of them.

"Young offenders are a marginalized group. They slap that label on them, and society looks at them like they're awful. Sometimes when I read comments online, it just drives me up the wall.

"They just assume that these people can't contribute to society," Anderson said.

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/news/youth+worker+helps+offenders+vote/11448517/story.html>

Why I Voted in Canada's National Election

[Marlana Thompson-Baker](#)

10/19/15

Over the last couple of years an urgency has invigorated Turtle Island.... a call to action that has awakened all the First Nations. Idling no more against the destruction of our mother earth. Rallying against broken treaties and fighting to secure the future of our seven generations.

First Nations' peoples have been standing up across Canada. Both the government's and big oil's attempt to frack the earth to pump oil up and pipe it across Canada, all in the name of making a dollar, shows no thought to the devastation it would cause. It will poison the soil, the water, the air, the plants and animals, and the people.

Being a traditional Mohawk mother, who grew up on the Akwesasne Mohawk Reservation, I have always fought for the earth and our way of life with the rest of my nation. We have fought against the big companies Domtar, GM and ALCOA—corporations that surround our reserve and pollute the St. Lawrence River and the land. The [pollution has been so bad](#) our farm animals either could not reproduce or their offspring were so deformed they would have to be put down right after birth.

Currently, I live in British Columbia with my Squamish nation husband, actor and lacrosse player Wayne Baker. I've just done something I never thought I would do: I voted for the first time in the Canadian federal election. Many people I know will ask why I went against my beliefs and the teachings of the [Two Row Wampum belt](#): "In our canoe we have all our laws, culture, and beliefs and in your vessel you shall have all your laws, culture, and beliefs, traveling side by side through life as equals never enforcing or interfering in each others affairs as long as the sun shall shine the grass shall grow and the rivers shall flow this will be everlasting."

But since this belt was made, the government of Canada and the Crown has not lived up to it or other treaties they have made with the First Nations people of Canada. This is why I voted. Who I voted for is no secret. After months of listening to election promises and looking at past track records of the candidates, and after the press conference the NDP had on the Enoch reserve that was broadcasted live on APTN, I VOTED NDP with great hope that all Tom Monclair's [promises to First Nations](#) and to our environment are true.

With so many [first-time indigenous voters](#), I hope 2015 will bring a change for the good. I hope more treaties will be honored and the quality of life on reservations across Canada, particularly those that have third-world conditions, will improve. Most of all I hope our Mother Earth is able to recover from the destruction wreaked on her and that she is able to sustain our future generations.

Marlana Thompson-Baker is an Akwesasne-born Mohawk Designer. She now lives in Squamish, BC with her Squamish Nation husband, actor Wayne Baker, and her 3 children.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/10/19/why-i-voted-canadas-national-election>

Not voting self-fulfilling alienation

Celine Cooper

Sunday, October 18, 2015 8:12:20 EDT PM



An Elections Canada ballot box. Postmedia file.

After an epic 78 days of federal campaigning, Canadians will cap off the 42nd general election and head to the polls Monday.

Every vote counts, especially in a race this close. Don't let anyone tell you a single vote won't make a difference. Need proof? In the 2011 federal election, five of Canada's 308 ridings were decided by fewer than 100 ballots and 27 were decided by fewer than 1,000.

Any healthy democracy requires active citizenship, but getting people out to vote is a challenge. Participation in the Canadian voting process has been slipping for decades, particularly among young people. In the 2008 federal election only 58.8% of eligible voters cast a ballot. And while the numbers bounced slightly to 61.1% in the 2011 election, we also saw a widening generational gap: only 38.8% of young Canadians between the ages of 18 to 24 voted compared to 75.1% of Canadians ages 65 to 72.

Poverty, homelessness, recently acquired citizenship status and lower levels of education all contribute to lower levels of voting participation. Aboriginal communities also are less likely to vote. According to Elections Canada, the average voter turnout on First Nations reserves is 44%, 17 percentage points lower than the national average.

This is not to say that people who haven't voted are not actively engaged in their communities. Lower voter turnouts indicate Canadians either don't feel a deep connection to our political process, or some no longer see our system of partisan party politics and elections as welcoming avenues for civic engagement and democratic participation.

This is a problem with direct consequences. Parties know certain groups are less likely to go to the polls. As a result, many party strategists approach election campaigns -- like this one -- with clear voter management tactics. They want to win, so elections become less about promoting civic literacy, encouraging dialogue and motivating all Canadians to vote, and more about mobilizing core supporters on election day. There are reasons why critical issues like youth unemployment, water quality on First Nations reserves, poverty and homelessness do not take centre stage during campaigns.

Want to change this? Get to the polls.

Elections Canada reported voter turnout in advance polls was 3.63 million, up 73% from the 2011 federal election. This is great news.

There are approximately three million eligible young voters in Canada. Imagine if they turned up en masse wielding their demographic heft and demanding action on diverse priorities? It could change everything.

There also have been important conversations happening in First Nations communities. Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde, who has stated he will cast his first federal election ballot on Monday, is encouraging First Nations people to vote. According to the AFN, there are 51 federal ridings First Nations voters could influence.

Are you still undecided? Visit the party websites. Read their platforms. Look over their promises. There is still time to make an informed decision.

Unclear on the voting process or need more information? Check out Elections Canada online at elections.ca or call them at 1-800-463-6868. They are there to provide you with information on your electoral district, your local candidates, where to vote and what documents to bring with you. If you didn't receive a voter information card, you can register at the polls today.

Remember: your vote is your voice. Who will speak for you on election day?

Cooper writes a weekly column for the Montreal Gazette.

Direct Link: <http://www.shorelinebeacon.com/2015/10/18/not-voting-self-fulfilling-alienation>

Nunavut Tunngavik execs prep for annual meeting this week

Board members pass new travel policy, but with rules

STEVE DUCHARME, October 20, 2015 - 9:30 am



Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. President Cathy Towtongie and Vice-president James Eetoolook at a board meeting at Nanook School in Apex Oct. 19 in advance of the land claim organization's annual general meeting this week in Iqaluit. (PHOTO BY STEVE DUCHARME)

Blizzards and high winds in the Kivalliq wreaked havoc on travel this weekend, but redeye and early morning flights by Nunavut Tunngavik executives allowed its board of directors meeting, held prior to NTI's annual general meeting in Iqaluit, to proceed more or less on time.

The short afternoon session at Nanook School in Apex Oct. 19 gave NTI brass a chance to clear the table before the headlining event, which will unfold at the same venue, starting tomorrow.

Several items on the Oct. 19 agenda resolved issues from the last directors' meeting in early September, while others addressed new developments that have occurred since that time.

Namely, NTI agreed in principle to consider additional funding for the cash-starved Inuit Circumpolar Council-Canada and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami on the condition the respective presidents provide them with clear organizational priorities for the next four years.

Both national Inuit organizations have suffered heavy cutbacks in funding from the federal government in recent years.

ITK's core budget is [down approximately](#) 70 per cent from 2013.

ICC is asking NTI for \$150,000 in funding, which is up \$75,000 from what they received last year.

ITK, which has never requested funding of this kind from NTI, wants \$100,000.

NTI executives were supportive of ITK, however the recent election of Natan Obed, along with a perceived internal shift within the Inuit organization's hierarchy, had some board members voicing restraint.

"I support them, except ICC, I prefer to support in terms of financially because they only have \$1 million [to work with]," said NTI President Cathy Towtongie.

That's in comparison to an estimated \$5.3 million ITK is working with this year.

"Their original mandates have been done, and now they're seeking increase in funding. What does this mean? What are we going to use ITK for?" asked Kivalliq Inuit Association vice-president, Raymond Ningeocheak.

"They still have a place, because at one point they were the only voice in the North," said Qikiqtani Inuit Association President PJ Akeeagok.

Both Inuit organizations have until the end of the year to provide NTI with a updated strategys to be considered for funding.

On other issues, the board also passed their amended travel policy after several delays by members to agree on final wording.

The organization's finance committee will now have the power to approve requests for flight upgrades to executive class in "exceptional circumstances" by board members travelling in excess of four hours a day, and on a case-by-case basis.

NTI will still pursue the lowest available fare as their base policy.

Kivalliq Inuit Association President David Ningeongan was the only board member to vote against the travel upgrade.

In an update to the board, NTI's chief executive officer James Arreak said a director for the newly established Nunavut Inuit Training Corp. will be hired in November.

The corporation's board, consisting of five NTI representatives and two from the Government of Nunavut, will manage the funds from a [\\$175-million dollar settlement](#) [NTI](#) got from the Government of Canada who, they alleged, failed to properly train Inuit to fill skilled positions in the territory.

NTI has yet to decide what to do with an additional \$85 million they received as part of the settlement, but may use part of that sum to pay off debt.

The annual general meeting for NTI will begin in earnest Oct. 20 and continue until Oct. 22 at the Nanook School in Apex.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavut_tunngavik_execs_prep_for_annual_meeting_this_week/

Record 10 indigenous MPs elected to the House of Commons

8 Liberal and 2 NDP MPs of indigenous heritage will take a seat in Parliament

By Tim Fontaine, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 20, 2015 8:37 AM ET Last Updated: Oct 20, 2015 2:56 PM ET



In the inner-city riding of Winnipeg Centre, Liberal candidate Robert Falcon-Ouellette unseated long-time NDP MP Pat Martin, capturing 56 per cent of the vote. (CBC)

There will be a record number of indigenous people in the House of Commons following Monday's federal election, which saw 10 indigenous MPs elected.

That's an increase of three from the 2011 election, when seven indigenous people won seats. But there was a significant shift towards Liberal representation, away from Conservative and NDP.

Of the 18 indigenous candidates the Liberals ran, eight won seats. Only one, Yvonne Jones from Labrador, was an incumbent.

Notable new Liberal MPs include Jody Wilson-Raybould, a regional chief of the Assembly of First Nations who took the newly created riding of Vancouver-Granville with just over 40 per cent of the vote.

In the inner-city riding of Winnipeg Centre, former mayoral candidate Robert-

Falcon Ouellette unseated longtime NDP MP Pat Martin, capturing 56 per cent of the vote.



"The goal of this campaign was never, never, never just to win. The goal of this campaign was to see your values reflected in Ottawa, to see your values reflected in our Parliament," Ouellette said Monday night.

The NDP, which ran 22 indigenous candidates, saw just two of them elected. Incumbent Romeo Saganash barely held his Abitibi-Baie-James-Nunavik-Eeyou seat in a tight race against a non-indigenous Liberal challenger.

The Green Party ran 10 indigenous candidates but none were elected.



Nunavut Liberal candidate Hunter Tootoo defeated Inuit MP and cabinet minister Leona Aglukkaq. (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

The Conservatives, who once had four sitting indigenous MPs — the most of any party — lost every single one of them in this election. Two opted not to run again but two others were defeated, including the first Inuk cabinet minister, Leona Aglukkaq, who placed third in Nunavut.

While there were a record 54 indigenous candidates running in this election, indigenous people will end up occupying just three per cent of the 338 seats in the House of Commons:

Liberal Party of Canada

- Vance Badawey (Métis) - Niagara Centre, Ontario
- Yvonne Jones (Inuit) - Labrador
- Michael McLeod (Métis) - Northwest Territories
- Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Cree) - Winnipeg Centre, Manitoba
- Don Rusnak (Anishinaabe) - Thunder Bay-Rainy River, Ontario
- Hunter Tootoo (Inuit) - Nunavut
- Dan Vandal (Métis) - Saint Boniface-Saint Vital, Manitoba
- Jody Wilson-Raybould (Kwakwaka'wakw) - Vancouver Granville, B.C.

NDP

- Georgina Jolibois (Dene) - Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River, Saskatchewan
- Romeo Saganash (Cree) - Abitibi-Baie-James-Nunavik--Eeyou, Quebec

Those newly elected indigenous MPs now represent ridings in British Columbia, Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Working relationship

Justin Trudeau's Liberal Party has promised significant improvements to First Nations education, including \$2.6 billion in new funding over four years, as well as a vow to call an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

Trudeau also promised to [end boil-water advisories on First Nations reserves within five years.](#)

On Twitter, the head of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) congratulated the Liberals on their victory and national chief Perry Bellegarde said he looks forward to working with the new government on "closing the gap" — the AFN's plan for reducing poverty and improving education for First Nations.

Corrections

- An earlier version of this story said Leona Aglukkaq was the first Inuk MP. She was the first Inuk cabinet minister.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/indigenous-guide-to-house-of-commons-1.3278957>

Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt loses riding

[National News](#) | October 20, 2015 by [APTN National News](#)



APTN National News

The Stephen Harper government's Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt has gone down to electoral defeat in his New Brunswick, swept away in a red wave washing over the Atlantic Canada region on Monday evening.

As the votes came in early Monday evening, Valcourt was barely hanging on to third place in his riding of Madawaska-Restigouche in northwestern New Brunswick, leading to a quick projection of his loss.

Valcourt was beat by Liberal candidate Rene Arseneault.

Valcourt was controversial during his time as Aboriginal Affairs minister. Appointed to the post in February 2013, Valcourt was minister when the Idle No More movement burst onto the national scene.

Valcourt ended his term as minister facing a court challenge from several First Nations over his First Nation Transparency Act, which forces bands to post their financial information online.

He also presided over the unraveling of the First Nation Control of First Nation Education Act, an education bill that died on the order paper after the majority of chiefs opposed it becoming law.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/10/20/aboriginal-affairs-minister-bernard-valcourt-loses-riding/>

Red sky at night, Indigenous delight

"In the past, politicians didn't care about indigenous issues because we didn't care to vote."

By John Lagimodiere, [for CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 20, 2015 9:05 AM CT Last Updated: Oct 20, 2015 9:05 AM CT



Canadian Liberal Party leader Justin Trudeau waves on stage in Montreal on October 20, 2015 after winning the federal election. (Nicholas Kamm/AFP/Getty Images)

As the "red wave" started taking over the east coast, indigenous people across Canada started to feel a little bit of hope.

Could it be that after ten years of battling the Conservatives at seemingly every turn there may actually be a change?

As Ontario and Quebec went red too, that wave turned to relief for indigenous people. Liberal leader Justin Trudeau was quickly confirmed as the prime minister-designate with a solid majority of 184. Stephen Harper, who is stepping down, and the Conservatives were left with just 99 seats. The NDP with only 44.

Indigenous people who usually don't vote came out in droves to take selfies outside of the polling booth, but mostly to "heave Steve" or vote "anybody but Conservative" (ABC). There were stories of reserve communities running out of ballots. The St Mary's polling station in Saskatoon-West was literally overwhelmed with the amount of voters, a majority of them indigenous. The First Nation and Métis vote certainly helped Saskatoon-West winner NDP Sheri Benson and NDP Georgina Jolibois in the Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River riding.

So, the Harper government is gone, but some folks say the Liberals are the same cat with different stripes. Remember, the Liberals are the party that tabled the White Paper that

proposed full assimilation and in the 1990s imposed the dreaded 2 per cent cap on First Nation funding. They also had many years to apologise for the residential schools, but alas, just didn't get around to it during their last mandate.

The Liberals certainly do have a tainted past, but indigenous people have reason to be optimistic. The Liberal Party promised to remove that 2 per cent cap on funding, inject billions into education, accept the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous People and implement the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The party also called for a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and in his victory speech, Trudeau promised to negotiate on a nation-to-nation basis.

That's a big list but how do we hold them to it?

Liberal candidates Lisa Abbott and Della Anaquod ran great campaigns. Lawrence Joseph got as close as you can get in Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River and believe me, those voices will be heard in Ottawa. They have a great indigenous caucus and also elected five indigenous Members of Parliament. Plus there is always old faithful, Ralph Goodale.

But the most powerful thing pushing forward the agenda will be the people. Indigenous people are engaged on a new level. This is an historic step. In the past, politicians didn't care about indigenous issues because we didn't care to vote. This massive turnout will certainly make the Liberal party, and Trudeau for that matter, pay attention to the indigenous people of Canada.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/opinion-red-sky-at-night-indigenous-delight-1.3279690>

Lepine pledges to continue advocating aboriginal rights as NDP slips to third

By [Cullen Bird](#), Today staff

Tuesday, October 20, 2015 12:59:31 MDT AM



Melody Lepine, the New Democratic Party candidate in Fort McMurray-Cold Lake chats with a reporter from her home in downtown Fort McMurray on Monday October 19, 2015. Robert Murray/Fort McMurray Today/Postmedia Network

Although she came a distant third in the race for Fort McMurray-Cold Lake, NDP candidate Melody Lepine said she is pleased to be the first First Nation federal election candidate in the region's history.

Lepine's campaign brought in just 8% of the vote, down from 115 in the last byelection. Conservative incumbent MP David Yurdiga won reelection by a comfortable margin with 60%, as Liberal candidate Kyle Harrietha came in second with 28%.

"I'm always going to be an advocate for aboriginal and treaty rights," Lepine said. She'll be going back to her normal role as industry relations manager with Mikisew Cree First Nation now that the election is over, she continued.

"We're going to hold the Liberal government accountable to some significant commitments that they've made in terms of consultation, environmental protections, education support, housing issues, clean drinking water, and most importantly call an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women," Lepine said.

"The Mikisew Cree community will continue to push for reconciliation on those important issues with the new Liberal majority government," she said. "It is what it is and we have to move on, and I congratulate David on his win."

Lepine said she's proud to have run a clean campaign, likely a reference to repeated attacks Liberal candidate Kyle Harrietha made against Yurdiga's performance as an MP in Parliament.

"Considering what I was up against, a strong Conservative riding, I still have my integrity and respect for other candidates no matter what party they belong to," she said.

Though she didn't know what to expect when she entered the race, Lepine said she was buoyed by the support she felt in the community for her candidacy.

"And I think it was not just support for the NDP, but also support because they recognized an indigenous woman having the courage to put her name forward," she said. "I think that sparked a lot of excitement and pride in our indigenous communities. That has never happened before in our region."

Lepine said she might consider running in the next federal election. Lepine entered the race late, several weeks after the election campaign officially began.

The late start meant a scramble to recruit volunteers and raise funds for a campaign budget, she said.

"Trying to catch up with everybody else in the region was a huge challenge for me."

After Yurdiga was announced as the winner of the local campaign she got a call from MCFN Chief Steve Courtoreille.

"He said that I'm still a winner in the eyes of the Mikisew Cree, that the community's still so proud of me," she said. "He called me right away actually and congratulated me on running a good election and giving it my best. It was the first phone call that I got, and I'm quite honoured by that."

Though she won't be heading to Parliament, Lepine said she's still happy to be going back to her old job.

"It's still going to benefit the people in this region, the work that I do."

Direct Link: <http://www.fortmcmurraytoday.com/2015/10/20/lepine-pledges-to-continue-advocating-aboriginal-rights-as-ndp-slips-to-third>

First Nations look forward to new relationship with Ottawa: chiefs



Left to right, Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Derek Nepinak, Grand Chief of Manitoba Keewatinowik Okimakanak Sheila North Wilson, and Kevin Hart, Manitoba regional chief with the Assembly of First Nations, speak at the Assembly of Manitoba's Chiefs' office in Winnipeg, on Tuesday, Oct. 20, 2015.

Chinta Puxley, The Canadian Press
Published Tuesday, October 20, 2015 1:55PM CST
Last Updated Tuesday, October 20, 2015 7:22PM CST

WINNIPEG -- Some First Nations leaders say the federal election awoke a sleeping giant that the incoming Liberal government will have to contend with -- starting with an inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Voter turnout spiked by up to 20 per cent in some largely aboriginal ridings. Chiefs said Tuesday the higher turnout helped drive the Conservatives from office after almost a decade and bring about the prospect of a new, respectful relationship with Ottawa.

A jubilant Grand Chief Derek Nepinak with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs called it "a great day."

"I feel a lot of relief from the years of very purposeful oppression that was brought forward from the previous government," Nepinak said.

"Mr. Harper, when he was prime minister, awoke a sleeping giant in our people. That giant is awake and the new Liberal majority government is going to have to deal with a giant in the indigenous people of these lands."

In the riding of Churchill-Keewatinook Aski, which covers much of Manitoba's north, chiefs said turnout was up by more than 11,000 voters -- an increase of 20 per cent from 2011. Some polling stations on reserves worried the high turnout would lead to their running out of ballots, which prompted last-minute calls to Elections Canada.

Elections Canada said Tuesday it hadn't calculated aboriginal voter turnout yet.

Expectations of a new Liberal government are high. Chiefs have a list of issues they want addressed. At the top is an inquiry into Canada's estimated 1,200 missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Grand Chief Sheila North Wilson, who represents northern First Nations in Manitoba, said people are looking for an inquiry to be called within the first 100 days of Justin Trudeau's mandate. The families of those who have lost loved ones must be the driving force, she said.

"There are many things that we're hearing from our own families of why they see these problems," said North Wilson, who is with Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak. "A lot of it has to do with poverty, lack of education and even just the complete disregard for our people."

Trudeau reiterated his commitment to an inquiry Tuesday, saying he looks forward to sitting down with chiefs and other stakeholders to move it forward.

"There is a need for a national public inquiry to bring justice for the victims, healing for the families, and to put an end to this tragedy," he said. "That's what we will do -- we will work with communities and with engaged stakeholders to ensure that we get moving on this quickly."

Kevin Hart, Manitoba regional chief with the Assembly of First Nations, said his people woke up with a sense of relief and look forward to working with Ottawa. Housing, clean

water, equal education funding and resource-sharing for First Nations communities are all top priorities, he said.

"Change was needed. Fear-mongering, hate literature and hate campaigns against ethnic groups across Canada failed. True Canadians came out and showed support," Hart said.

Hopes are high among northern Ontario aboriginals as well.

Chief Erwin Redsky of the Shoal Lake 40 First Nation on the Manitoba-Ontario boundary said turnout was up in 40 First Nations within the riding of Kenora. Redsky said it was at least 90 per cent on his reserve, which has been under a boil-water advisory for 17 years and has been fighting for a rudimentary all-weather road.

Greg Rickford, who was natural resources minister, lost his seat to former Liberal Indian Affairs Minister Bob Nault in a tough three-way race. People were engaged this time around, Redsky said, especially when they heard promises of a new nation-to-nation relationship with Canada.

"I asked my wife to pinch me," Redsky said. "I thought I'd never hear that ... We look forward to this new era. The work has just begun."

Direct Link: <http://winnipeg.ctvnews.ca/first-nations-look-forward-to-new-relationship-with-ottawa-chiefs-1.2619319>

'Harper awoke a sleeping giant': First Nations break election records



Nicole Gibillini, CTVNews.ca

Published Tuesday, October 20, 2015 2:58PM EDT

Last Updated Wednesday, October 21, 2015 1:52PM EDT

Monday's election was historic for Canada's First Nations community, which saw 10 indigenous MPs elected.

Winners included Liberals Vance Badawey, who was elected in Niagara Centre, and Yvonne Jones, who was re-elected in Labrador.

The election also saw a record-breaking 54 indigenous candidates run for office.



A First Nations headdress sits on a table as Federal Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau addresses the Assembly of First Nations congress in Montreal on July 7, 2015. (Ryan Remiorz / THE CANADIAN PRESS)



Left to right, Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Derek Nepinak, Grand Chief of Manitoba Keewatinowik Okimakanak Sheila North Wilson, and Kevin Hart, Manitoba regional chief with the Assembly of First Nations, speak at the Assembly of Manitoba's Chiefs' office in Winnipeg, on Tuesday, Oct. 20, 2015.

Each candidate ran in one of the 51 swing ridings identified by Assembly of First Nations Chief Perry Bellegarde, where he said the aboriginal vote could make a difference between a majority and minority government.

Among the major Conservative upsets Monday night was Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt, who was ousted by Liberal candidate Rene Arsenault in his New Brunswick riding of Madawaska-Restigouche.

On Tuesday, Grand Chief Derek Nepinak, of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, and Grand Chief Sheila North Wilson, of Manitoba Keewatinowik Okimakanak, spoke at the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs in Winnipeg about the election results.

North Wilson congratulated the Liberal Party on their victory and said MKO was happy with the turnout. She estimated that more than 11,000 new voters went to the polls in northern Manitoba on Monday.

“We have to say our people got engaged, got involved, and they were tired of what they were seeing in the last six years especially,” North Wilson said.

At least five first nations reportedly needed extra ballots brought in to accommodate the numbers.

"In other southern communities, we are told there was, in fact, ballots that ran out," said Wilson.

There was also an uptick in participation on reserves. Numbers are traditionally very low, but voting was up by as much as 20 per cent in some ridings.

Nepinak expressed his excitement about the turnout.

"It's a really great day because so many people went out to put their words into action," he said. "So many of our indigenous people across the country recognize that to participate in a Canadian federal election does not compromise their sovereignty."

While efforts were made to mobilize First Nations voters through a "Rock the Vote" campaign, Manitoba's Grand Chiefs believe the huge response can be attributed solely to a desire to oust Stephen Harper from office.

"I believe that Mr. Harper, when he was prime minister, awoke a sleeping giant in our people, and that giant is awake," said Wilson.

"The new Liberal majority government under Mr. Trudeau is going to have to deal with a giant in the indigenous people of these lands."

Trudeau has promised to boost aboriginal education by \$1.6 billion, and provide an additional \$200 million for employment training.

But the top priority for Manitoba's Grand Chiefs is an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women.

Throughout the election campaign, a number of First Nations leaders, especially Bellegarde, encouraged their communities to vote. There was a 44-per-cent aboriginal voter turnout in 2011, but Bellegarde and other First Nations leaders expected a much higher turnout for Monday's election.

"There was a lot of excitement on the ground," Bellegarde told CTV News Monday as election results came in. Bellegarde said First Nations leaders across Canada arranged for buses to bring people living on reserves to polling stations, making it easier for them to vote.

Bellegarde said his next step as national AFN chief will be to build a relationship with the new prime minister, but noted: "Before you build relationships, you must build respect, collaboration, co-operation."

Below is a list of the 51 swing ridings, identified by the AFN, and the candidate and party who won them. The letter 'I' identifies whether the candidate was an incumbent. There were 24 wins for the Liberals, including 17 gains, nine wins for the Conservatives, 16 for the NDP, and two for the Bloc Québécois.

- **Labrador** –Yvonne Jones, Liberal (I)
- **Long Range Mountains** - Gudie Hutchings, Liberal
- **Dartmouth-Cole Harbour** - Darren Fisher, Liberal (gain)
- **Kings-Hants** – Scott Brison, Liberal (I)
- **Sydney-Victoria** - Mark Eyking, Liberal (I)
- **Abitibi - Baie-James** – Nunavik - Eeyou – Romeo Saganash, NDP (I)
- **Avignon-La Mitis-Matane-Matapedia** – Remi Masse, Liberal (gain)
- **Becancour-Nicolet-Sauvel** - Louis Plamondon, BQ, (I)
- **Gasp.-Iles-de-la-Madeleine** – Diane Lebouthillier, Liberal (gain)
- **Longueuil – Saint-Hubert** – Pierre Nantel, NDP (I)
- **Louis- Saint-Laurent** – Gerard Deltell, Conservative (gain)
- **Manicouagan** – Marilene Gill, BQ (gain)
- **Montmagny – L'Islet – Kamouraska**– Bernard Genereux, Conservative (gain)
- **Algoma-Manitoulin-Kapuskasing** – Carol Hughes, NDP (I)
- **Brantford-Brant** – Phil McColeman, Conservative (I)
- **Kenora** – Bob Nault, Liberal (gain)
- **London North Centre** – Peter Fragiskatos, Liberal (gain)
- **Mississauga-Malton** -- Navdeep Bains, Liberal (gain)
- **Niagara Centre** – Vance Badawey, Liberal (gain)
- **Nipissing-Timiskaming** – Anthony Rota, Liberal (gain)
- **Sault Ste. Marie** – Terry Sheehan, Liberal (gain)
- **Scarborough-Guildwood** – John McKay, Liberal (I)
- **Thunder Bay-Superior North** – Patty Hajdu, Liberal (gain)
- **Timmins-James Bay** -- Charlie Angus, NDP (I)
- **Churchill-Keewatinook Aski** – Niki Ashton, NDP (I)
- **Dauphin-Swan River-Neepawa** -- Robert Sopuck, Conservative (I)
- **Elmwood- Transcona** – Daniel Blaikie, NDP (gain)
- **Winnipeg Centre** -- Robert-Falcon Ouellette, Liberal (gain)
- **Winnipeg North** – Kevin Lamoureux, Liberal (I)
- **Winnipeg South Centre** – Jim Carr, Liberal (gain)
- **Battlefords-Lloydminster** – Gerry Ritz, Conservative (I)
- **Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill** - Georgina Jolibois, NDP (gain)
- **Prince Albert**- Randy Hoback, Conservative (I)
- **Regina-Lewvan** – Erin Weir, NDP (gain)
- **Regina-Qu'Appelle** - Andrew Scheer, Conservative (I)
- **Regina-Wascana** – Ralph Goodale, Liberal (I)
- **Saskatoon West** – Sheri Benson, NDP (gain)
- **Edmonton Griesbach** – Kerry Diotte, Conservative
- **Cariboo-Prince George** - Todd Doherty, Conservative
- **Courtenay-Alberni** – Gord Johns, NDP (gain)
- **Cowichan-Malahat-Langford** – Alistair MacGregor, NDP (I)

- **Mission-Matsqui-Fraser Canyon** - Jati Sidhu, Liberal (gain)
- **Nanaimo-Ladysmith** – Sheila Malcolmson, NDP (gain)
- **Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke** – Randall Garrison, NDP (I)
- **Skeena-Bulkley Valley** – Nathan Cullen, NDP (I)
- **South Okanagan-West Kootenay** – Richard Cannings, NDP (gain)
- **Surrey Centre - Randeep Sarai**, Liberal (gain)
- **Surrey-Newton** – Sukh Dhaliwal, Liberal (gain)
- **North Island-Powell River** – Rachel Blaney, NDP (gain)
- **Yukon** – Larry Bagnell, Liberal (gain)
- **Northwest Territories** – Michael McLeod, Liberal (gain)

With files from CTV's Manitoba Bureau Chief Jill Macyshon

Direct Link: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/election/harper-awoke-a-sleeping-giant-first-nations-break-election-records-1.2619227>

Election restores 'sense of power' in First Nations, Manitoba chief says

Métis vote 'made a clear difference' in election, Manitoba Métis president David Chartrand says

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 20, 2015 10:49 AM CT Last Updated: Oct 21, 2015 1:54 PM CT



There is "a sense of power" being restored to First Nations communities across the province Tuesday after the Liberals' decisive federal election win, says Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Grand Chief Sheila North-Wilson.

The Liberals ousted the Conservatives with a majority government, capturing 184 seats or 54.4 per cent of the vote.

"People are seeing what difference they can make," North-Wilson said, adding the "Rock the Vote" movement pushed indigenous voters to the polls.

'The young people said the status quo is not acceptable.' - *Perry Bellegarde*

"I think people this time around knew the effects of what this Conservative government did to our people and made sure that it did not happen again."

Derek Nepinak, grand chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, said outgoing Prime Minister Stephen Harper "awoke a sleeping giant" in First Nations people.

"That giant is awake," Nepinak said. "A Liberal majority government is going to have to deal with the giant and indigenous people of these lands."

Perry Bellegarde, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, credited youth for investing time and energy into getting First Nation people to the polls.

"The young people said the status quo is not acceptable and we're tired of crappy housing and caps on education and we have to bring about change," Bellegarde said.



AMC Grand Chief Derek Nepinak (left), AFN Grand Chief Sheila North-Wilson (centre) and AFN Manitoba regional Chief Kevin Hart (right) meet Tuesday morning following the Liberal's majority federal election win. (CBC)

"We've had chiefs that shut down their communities and bused people to the polls and had high numbers of people turning out to the polls. That's a positive indication of the excitement and the real willingness was to drive forward that change."

David Chartrand, the president of the Manitoba Métis Federation, said conditions leading up to the election created "the perfect storm for the parties and their candidates."

"Our push to get our citizens out to vote in both the advance polls and on election day has made a clear difference," Chartrand said. "We proved our Métis votes matter and we are confident our Métis citizens have made an informed choice."

'Win-win situation'

Michael Redhead Champagne, an indigenous activist in Winnipeg, said he believes there was more engagement, specifically in urban areas, than in past elections.



Jenna Wirch (left) voted in the election; Ninoondawah Richard (right) did not. (Karen Pauls/CBC)

"It is a win-win situation because what we're hoping to do is build the political literacy of average citizens, and the more citizens understand, the more they're going to be able to engage in critical thinking as well as engage in the electoral process themselves — both as candidates but also as helpers to make sure it gets fixed properly because, it's broken right now," he said.

Ninoondawah Richard said he didn't vote because to do so would be to legitimize a broken system.

"For me, for my culture, if I do that, it's like taking a step back," Richard said.

'Our voice does matter'

Jenna Wirch voted and was part of the Indigenous Rock the Vote movement.

"When I did vote, it tugged at my heartstrings because I was raised as a sovereign person growing up with those sovereign beliefs, but at the same time, growing up in the urban area as an indigenous person, we're taught our voice does matter and the only way we're going to make a change is if you go vote," Wirch said.

"The elections aren't going to change our lives. What's going to change our lives and our communities is us."

Champagne said the true test will be to see if the Liberals work to ensure citizens remain engaged in the political process.

"It's important for us to participate in voting, but also the other 364 days a year to volunteer your time, voting with your dollar, so we encourage everyone to stay involved."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/election-restores-sense-of-power-in-first-nations-manitoba-chief-says-1.3280118>

Assembly of First Nations Chief Perry Bellegarde welcomes Liberal win

Bellegarde wants more attention paid to education and housing

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 20, 2015 1:02 PM CT Last Updated: Oct 20, 2015 1:02 PM CT



The Chief of the Assembly of First Nations says he's excited with the prospect of working with incoming prime minister Justin Trudeau.

Chief Perry Bellegarde was impressed Trudeau brought up First Nations issues in his victory speech last night. One of Trudeau's [first campaign promises](#) was an increase of \$2.6 billion for First Nations Education.

"He echoed the six priorities we put forward to the parties," said Bellegarde. "According to the United Nations, Canada is rated sixth for quality of life, and to indigenous, we're 63rd. And that gap represents the gap on education and the gap represents the overcrowding in housing and the gap represents the high youth suicide rate."

Bellegarde hoped to work on rebuilding a nation to nation relationship with the federal government. Many First Nations chiefs were unhappy with their relationship with the federal government under the Conservative Party.

"It's about building a relationship with the prime minister and his cabinet and a respectful relationship that is based on cooperation and collaboration and working together closely," said Bellegarde.

This is the [first federal election](#) Bellegarde has voted in, mainly because he believed First Nations negotiate with the Crown, not individual political parties.

He admits to being nervous when he stepped into the ballot box.

"It's about bringing change and another tool in our tool box to bring about change."

Bellegarde said he plans to set up a formal first meeting with Trudeau soon.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/assembly-of-first-nations-chief-perry-bellegarde-welcomes-liberal-win-1.3280535>

Northwestern Ontario First Nations run out of ballots

Reported higher-than-average turnouts at a number of First Nation community polls

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 20, 2015 7:00 AM ET Last Updated: Oct 20, 2015 7:00 AM ET



At least two First Nations communities in northwestern Ontario ran out of ballots on election day. (CBC)

Election officials working in at least two First Nations communities in northwestern Ontario had to order more ballots, as people watching the First Nation voter turnout said many polls were much busier than usual this year.

The electoral officer in Shoal Lake 40 First Nation told CBC News the community ran out of ballots for about an hour in the afternoon.

Similarly, in Onigaming First Nation, Chief Katherine Kishiqueb said late Monday afternoon, it became apparent to electoral staff that more ballots would be needed.

"The electoral officers and the people there at the polling station had realized we were going to be running out of [ballots]," she said. "I think we were down to the last 10 ... and we knew that there was still quite a few people to go yet."

Kishiqueb said additional ballots were quickly delivered.

The polling station seemed much busier than during the 2011 election, Kishiqueb said, adding that she believes more than twice the number of people in her community cast ballots this year.

"They wanted to be part of an opportunity to vote for who they felt would be the best candidate in our riding," she said.



Isadore Day was elected Ontario Regional Chief on June 17, 2015. He's from Serpent River First Nation in northern Ontario. (Anishinabek News)

Ballot shortages and reported higher turnouts showed that Indigenous voters were motivated this year, said Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day.

"Clearly First Nation voters woke up," he said.

"First Nation individuals that previously didn't vote are now voting and I think the other thing to recognize is that the communities became mobilized."

That mobilization included a host of volunteers in a number of communities with the [Rock the Vote campaign](#), that helped register First Nations voters.



Tania Cameron launched 'First Nations Rock the Vote' to encourage First Nations to hold information and identification clinics for their members. (Tania Cameron/Twitter)

Dalles First Nation councillor Tania Cameron organized the campaign and said she can't believe the turnouts she's hearing about in a number of communities. She pointed specifically to Pikangikum, a community with notoriously low voter participation.

"Last federal election, they had 75 votes," she said. "Tonight, they're reporting 300-plus. I'm so happy."

Volunteers with Rock the Vote were at the polls in a number of First Nations on election day, helping voters with things like proper identification and interpreting.

In Onigaming, Kishiqueb said the volunteers were a "major contributing factor," in getting the word out about voting.

Community leadership also played a bigger role in the lead-up to this year's election promoting the vote, as well as helping at the ballot box, than in years past, she added.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/northwestern-ontario-first-nations-run-out-of-ballots-1.3278981>

Some reserves run out of ballots with high First Nations voter turnout

Vancouver, BC, Canada / News Talk 980 CKNW | Vancouver's News. Vancouver's Talk

October 19, 2015 06:41 pm



Voter turnout was so high on some reserves on the Prairies that there were reports of a handful of polling stations running out of ballots.

Leanne Nyirfa with Elections Canada said stations were stocked with ballots based on turnout from the last federal election in 2011.

She said a station on Siksika Nation, east of Calgary, went without ballots for about 15 minutes until workers could deliver more.

Sheila North Wilson, grand chief of a group representing First Nations in northern Manitoba, said she was told there were not enough ballots on some remote reserves in the province.

She said some voters were given photocopies of blank ballots instead.

North Wilson said the turnout showed the First Nations vote has mobilized and people want change.

Direct Link: <http://www.cknw.com/2015/10/19/some-reserves-run-out-of-ballots-with-high-first-nations-voter-turnout/>

Vancouver Granville: First Nations leader now a rookie MP

Liberal Jody Wilson-Raybould wins in newly formed riding

By Gary Kingston, Vancouver Sun October 20, 2015

The Liberal tide that washed across Canada allowed lawyer and native leader Jody Wilson-Raybould to win the battle of high-profile female candidates in the new riding of Vancouver Granville.

The 44-year-old former regional chief of the Assembly of First Nations won the riding despite the fact Leadnow, one of the groups advocating strategic voting, had endorsed NDP candidate Mira Oreck.

Nearly 4,000 people in the riding had signed the strategic voting pledge. But Oreck, who once worked with Vision Vancouver and the city's Jewish community and who is a former New York-based political strategist, ran a distant third.

With 154 of 206 polls reporting, Wilson-Raybould had 17,769 votes. Conservative Erinn Broshko, a corporate lawyer and businessman, was second with 11,186 and Oreck third with 10,394.

"I am incredibly excited right now," Wilson-Raybould said after thanking the 80 cheering and chanting volunteers and supporters who showed up at a celebratory party at the Diamond Ballroom on West 8th just off Granville.

"It's sinking in the incredible momentum that moved across the country tonight.

"For me, this was the most important election in my lifetime," added Wilson-Raybould. "This election became about who we are as Canadians, about what we want for our country.

"People wanted to start another, better path for our country where we can ensure that all voices are heard. I'm very proud to be an aboriginal person in this country and proud of the diversity that exists in Vancouver-Granville and we need to ensure that diversity is reflected in the decisions, discussions and debates we have as a government."

Wilson-Raybould, a first-time candidate, has a long history of working to advance First Nations causes. She is the daughter of Bill Wilson, a lawyer and prominent aboriginal leader and uses Puglass — the native name given to her by her grandmother — as her Twitter handle. It means "a woman born to noble people."

The new riding was stitched together using four portioned-off sections of neighbouring electoral districts, two of which voted Liberal last time. It stretches through the heart of the city's residential neighbourhoods, from the mansions of Shaughnessy to the smaller homes and low-rise apartments of Marpole.

The Diamond Ballroom is located in a Masonic Hall three floors above one of the riding's polling stations. Several voters cast their ballots in the final 20 minutes on Monday night, with some well aware that the major broadcasters had already declared a Liberal win.

"No it didn't," said Adam Mullock when asked if the news had influenced his vote. "I'd already decided what my vote was. I voted Liberal. I just related with most of the way they think.

"It did surprise me, 33-0 (in Atlantic Canada)," Mullock said of the early Liberal lead. "I didn't expect that. It's cool, it's positive. We needed a change for sure."

Mullock and another Vancouver-Granville resident, Jason Lee, who made it the polling station just before 7 p.m., said they voted more for the Liberal party than Wilson-Raybould.

"I didn't know a lot about her," said Lee. "I did an online quiz and it was 96-per-cent swayed with the Liberals, even though I don't necessarily believe in everything (in their platform). But of the three choices I had, Liberal was definitely more of my belief system."

Direct Link:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/life/Vancouver+Granville+First+Nations+leader+rookie/1451059/story.html>

Aboriginal groups optimistic after Liberal majority win

Staff ~ The Labradorian editor@thelabradorian.ca Published on October 21, 2015



The NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC) president Todd Russell is hopeful that outstanding issues such as their land claim can finally be advanced since Monday's federal election.

"Labradorians hold a lot of confidence in (Labrador MP) Yvonne Jones and her abilities as their representative and advocate in Ottawa," said Todd Russell, President of the NCC.

"Ms. Jones has been extremely vocal in bringing Labrador and Aboriginal issues to the forefront and we appreciate her unwavering support of the NunatuKavut Land Claim."

NCC also congratulated Prime Minister-elect Justin Trudeau and the Liberal party on their majority win across Canada.

"The election results were phenomenal for the Liberal Party," said Russell. "It is a clear indication of the desire for change across the country and the trust that Canadians have placed in the vision and plan that Mr. Trudeau has for Canada."

Russell said Trudeau has shown his unequivocal support of NCC since becoming Liberal Party leader in 2013, noting he, along with Jones, recently affirmed the Liberal's Party's steadfast commitment to accept the NunatuKavut Land Claim and move it to the negotiating table immediately, should they form government.

"We commend Mr. Trudeau on his deep understanding of Aboriginal issues and his support for NunatuKavut," said Russell. "We look forward to working with him and Ms. Jones to expeditiously advance our Claim, which will have a tremendous impact on securing the overall well-being of our people for many generations."

During the campaign, NCC wrote all federal leaders to request their formal position on its Land Claim. In addition to the Liberal Party, the New Democratic Party and Green Party provided firm commitments.

"We are appreciative of the support from the three parties," said Russell. "We also applaud all candidates in Labrador for putting their names on the ballot and fighting such a long campaign."

'Productive relationship'

Other Aboriginal groups also extended their congratulations after the election.

"The Nunatsiavut Government extends its congratulations to Labrador MP Yvonne Jones on her re-election, and looks forward to working with her in advancing interests and concerns of Labrador Inuit," said Nunatsiavut President Sarah Leo.

"As well, the Nunatsiavut Government extends congratulations to the Prime Minister elect, Justin Trudeau, and is hopeful a productive working relationship can be established with the new federal Liberal Government."

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami President Natan Obed, said he welcomes the new government and the new opportunity for relationship-building with Inuit. He extended his congratulations to Prime Minister-designate Justin Trudeau and the four Members of Parliament for Inuit Nunangat, the Inuit homeland in Canada, including Labrador MP Yvonne Jones; Michael McLeod (Northwest Territories); Hunter Tootoo (Nunavut); and Romeo Saganash (Abitibi-Baie-James-Nunavik-Eeyou).

"Inuit look forward to working with the new government in the spirit of relationship-building and true partnership," said Obed. "I would also like to thank outgoing MPs Leona Aglukkaq and Dennis Bevington for their commitment to the Arctic and their service to Inuit."

In its Oct. 9 response to an ITK election questionnaire, the Liberal Party committed to immediately re-engage with Inuit communities and leadership in a renewed, respectful and inclusive nation-to-nation Kelowna process to advance progress on critical issues

such as housing, infrastructure, health and mental health care, poverty, food security, child welfare, economic opportunity and education.

On the subject of implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 calls to action, the party stated that it would work in partnership with Inuit and all Indigenous communities to fully implement the recommendations, starting with the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Direct Link: <http://www.thelabradorian.ca/news/regional/2015/10/21/aboriginal-groups-optimistic-after-liberal-majority-win.html>

Saganash ready to work with new Liberal government on northern, Indigenous issues

"The health of our economy and environment are so dependent on the government's relationship with First Nations, Inuit and Métis"

SARAH ROGERS, October 21, 2015 - 1:49 pm



NDP MP re-elect Romeo Saganash does media interviews shortly after his victory was declared in Abitibi-James Bay-Nunavik-Eeyou early Oct. 20. (PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NDP)

If the New Democratic Party's Romeo Saganash was first elected as MP on the back of the party's orange wave in 2011, this time around, he says it was hard work and experience that paid off.

Saganash [held onto Quebec's northernmost riding](#) in a close race with Liberal candidate Pierre Dufour, who led polls through most of the evening, until Saganash pulled away and won Abitibi-James Bay-Nunavik-Eeyou in the early hours of Oct. 20.

“I knew it was going to be tight,” Saganash told *Nunatsiaq News* Oct. 20. “The one thing that reassured me was that [Dufour] didn’t get away or widen that lead.”

Polls from riding’s Cree and Inuit communities trickled in last, boosting Saganash’s numbers.

And while he credits his win to votes from both Eeyou Istchee and Nunavik communities, Saganash noted the support he has grown in the riding’s southern hubs, which include the small city of Val d’Or.

“I had a really strong base of support even in the south, which is a reflection of the work I’ve done,” Saganash said.

“People know where I come from, my experience, and I think that’s what they voted for.”

Saganash finished the night with 12,788 votes, or 37 per cent of the ballots cast, about 1,700 votes ahead of second-place Dufour, who took 32.1 per cent of the vote.

The Bloc Québécois candidate Luc Ferland, a former provincial MNA in the region, came in third with 18.5 per cent of the vote, followed by Conservative candidate Steven Hébert, with 9.3 per cent.

Saganash said his contact with communities in Quebec’s largest riding, through social media and in-person visits, and his focus on Indigenous issues, won — and kept — the trust of constituents in Nunavik.

During his first term in office, Saganash served as NDP critic for international development and natural resources — and before this federal campaign got underway, he served as the NDP’s deputy critic for intergovernmental Aboriginal affairs.

Saganash said he’s also proud of the role that the NDP played in triggering the [Auditor General of Canada’s audit of the Nutrition North Canada program](#), which last year found the program did not ensure that northern retailers were passing on the full subsidy.

Upon his return to the House of Commons, Saganash said Nutrition North is one of the first issues he plans to raise, along with the high cost of living faced by many communities in the riding.

But he’ll return to Ottawa with a much smaller team: the NDP went from 103 MPs to just 44 — many of those losses in Quebec — losing its status as the official opposition.

That’s where Saganash hopes to use his experience as a negotiator to bend the ear of Justin Trudeau’s new Liberal majority government.

“I think the Liberals and I are in agreement on a lot of issues, and I’m confident I’ll have the ability to work with them,” he said.

“They’ve said they set up an inquiry on missing and murdered Indigenous women, and I’m going to push them on that promise.”

Saganash said he’ll be watching how the Liberal government delivers on its promises to renew Ottawa’s relationship with the country’s Indigenous peoples.

“[The health of] our economy and environment are so dependent on the government’s relationship with First Nations, Inuit and Métis,” he said.

“We have to continue on that path.”

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiagonline.ca/stories/article/65674saganash_ready_to_work_with_new_liberal_government_on_northern_indigen/

'Indigenous Rock the Vote' claims victory as Winnipeg Centre turnout soars

Voter turnout increases 26 per cent in downtown Winnipeg

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 20, 2015 3:48 PM CT Last Updated: Oct 20, 2015 3:48 PM CT



Preliminary numbers from Elections Canada for Winnipeg Centre show nearly 61 per cent of voters cast a ballot in Monday's federal election.

That's a 26 per cent increase over the 2011 federal election voter participation rate of 48.2 per cent.

Indigenous Rock the Vote is claiming some of the credit for that increase. About 17 per cent of residents in Winnipeg Centre are aboriginal, according to the last census. The volunteer-run organization, which grew out of Idle No More, held awareness campaigns and mobilized voters in Winnipeg's inner city throughout the campaign.

"We were doing everything that we could to mobilize," said Sadie-Phoenix Lavoie, Indigenous Rock the Vote's youth representative. "I love that the voter turnout skyrocketed."



Justin Fontaine, 22, was a first-time voter in Monday's election. He said he supported Liberal candidate Robert-Falcon Ouellette. (CBC)

First-time voter and Winnipeg Centre resident Justin Fontaine, 22, said he cast a ballot for Robert-Falcon Ouellette because he saw himself reflected in the Liberal candidate. Ouellette soared to power in the downtown riding, winning with 55 per cent of the vote and ousting longtime NDP MP Pat Martin.

"I don't see a lot of indigenous people in politics," Fontaine said.

Watching Ouellette rise to power Monday night made him feel "wonderful."

"[Indigenous people] wanted Harper out and Harper is racist against indigenous," he said. "That's what I personally think."

When people vote before they turn 25, they tend to be voters for life, said Lavoie.

"The way democracy works is participation, and people are starting to realize that now," she said.

Lavoie hopes the Liberal government will be more open than the Conservatives to discussing issues important to Manitoba's indigenous community, such as problems on Shoal Lake 40 First Nation (the source of Winnipeg's drinking water), environmental issues and pipeline development.

"There are a lot of issues that we still have to work on with the Liberal government," she said. "We're happy that the Liberal government is going to be more susceptible to listening to us and including us and creating solutions."

Voter participation was also high in Manitoba's north, where turnout increased in Churchill-Keewatinook Aski by nearly 50 per cent.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/indigenous-rock-the-vote-claims-victory-as-winnipeg-centre-turnout-soars-1.3280783>

'I'm excited about getting our country back': Indigenous MPs ready for new government

By April Johnson Global News, October 21, 2015 5:20 pm



Jody Wilson-Raybould is the Liberal candidate in Vancouver-Granville.

A record number of elected indigenous MPs and increased numbers of indigenous voters suggests that First Nations are ready for a new partnership with the federal government.

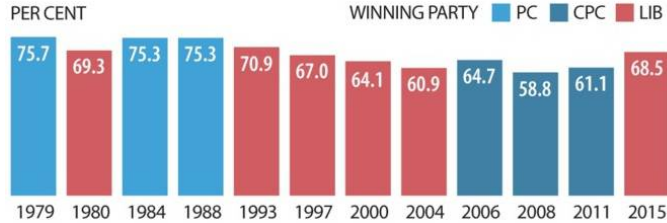
“We had joked that we were going to paddle our canoes to the polls and that would be really good to see in the news,” says Celena Cook, community member at Hitatcu First Nation on Vancouver Island, after an 18 wheeler blocked the one road in and out of her community on election day.

” We were determined this year,” Cook adds. ” There were people who waited for the accident to be cleared and they arrived at the polls just at seven o’clock. By then the doors were locked at the poll station – but they had heard about the accident, and opened the doors and let those people vote.”

The determination of Hitatcu community members echoes the sentiment of First Nations across the country, with long waits at reserve polling stations – some reserves ran out of ballots as demand exceeded voting expectations.

FEDERAL ELECTION VOTER TURNOUT

Voter turnout for federal elections since 1979:



The spike in indigenous participation in politics will soon be visible in the House of Commons as well. Ten indigenous MPs were elected on Monday, including Jody Wilson-Raybould, Liberal party leader for Vancouver-Granville.

“I’m incredibly excited about getting our country back,” Wilson-Raybould says. “I congratulate all of the indigenous candidates for putting their name forward for public office. We’re at a critical period of time for our country, and I believe that a House of Commons that more accurately reflects the diversity that exists in our country, the better and more thoughtful decisions we will make.”

During their election campaign, the Liberal government promised an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women, – \$515 million per year to support First Nations’ education and a lift on the two per cent funding cap on First Nations programs.

According to the Liberal Party’s website, the funding cap will be replaced with “one that provides them with sufficient, predictable, and sustained funding to support their communities’ priorities.”

Although it has not yet been specified how much funding will be allocated to improving on-reserve infrastructure or urban social services, Regional Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Shane Gottfriedson still described the newly-elected government as “a breath of fresh air.”

“They have 30, 60 90 and 120 day plans on how they are going to roll out things,” says Gottfriedson.

During the election campaign, the Liberals said they welcomed the AFN’s 2015 election priorities. Of particular concern to the AFN is ‘Closing the Gap’ – an assembly action plan aimed at eliminating ‘The Gap’ that exists between the quality of life experienced by First Nations people and non-Indigenous Canadians.

“When you look at the number of social and economic determinants for both on-reserve and off-reserve, the challenge that we face is inadequate funding. When you look at the two per cent cap that has been imposed on our local governments and our urban governments, such as Friendship centres and societies, it boils down to making sure our people have access to services,” says Gottfriedson. “In terms of a national strategy, we want to sit down and look at a fiscal relationship on closing ‘The Gap’ for all of our First Nations. It’s essential that we look at long-term solutions for infrastructure needs.”



In an effort to ensure funding and support for First Nations issues, indigenous Canadians were urged by many prominent elders and chiefs to cast a ballot in this year's election. The message was heard by AFN's National Chief Perry Bellegarde, who voted for the first time on Oct. 19.

"I don't want my not voting to be an excuse for First Nations people not to participate in the upcoming election," Bellegarde said, adding he didn't vote in the past in the interest of being non-partisan, having been told that aboriginal leaders in Canada must work with the entire Crown, regardless of the party that's in power.

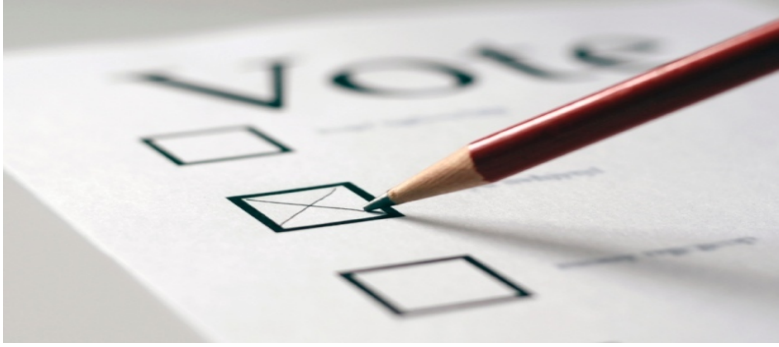
This year's election brought in the highest voter turnout since 1993 with more than 17 million voters casting a ballot. The Trudeau cabinet will be sworn in Nov. 4.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2291148/im-excited-about-getting-our-country-back-indigenous-mps-ready-for-new-government/>

Several Sask. polling stations short on ballots as aboriginal voters show up in droves

Many said they were determined to make their mark this time

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 20, 2015 7:12 PM CT Last Updated: Oct 20, 2015 7:12 PM CT



Running out of ballots is both a problem and sign of success when it comes to the aboriginal vote in Saskatchewan.

CBC has received at least three reports of polling stations temporarily running out of ballots, on three First Nations, leaving observers to note that aboriginal people came out in droves to cast ballots during this election.

Voter turnout across the province was up. Elections Canada said 72.1 per cent of eligible voters in the province cast a ballot in the election. That's up from 66 per cent in 2011.

Elections Canada does not track by ethnicity, and the above numbers do not include people who only registered on voting day at the poll.

The riding of Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River was one of the tightest races in the country.

The NDP edged out the Liberals by only 70 votes. Liberal candidate Lawrence Joseph said he's upset that running out of ballots at one point may have swayed the result.

"At my reserve, Big River First Nation, in fact they had to go running twice, to go and find more ballots I guess. That is just totally not acceptable."

Joseph said some people did not wait for new ballots to arrive. Liberals have to end of the week to request a recount.

"On the good side that was really nice to see, because in previous elections, people have just sat home and said, 'the heck with it,' and you can't blame them. Because you've been conditioned to think that your vote doesn't count," Joseph said.

"Obviously now there's an awakening happening." - *Lawrence Joseph, Liberal candidate*

"Obviously now there's an awakening happening. And thanks to Mr. Harper and his Conservatives I think the awakening ... the majority of the people that voted were calling for change."

Joseph also wondered if Elections Canada staff were trained to be as patient as they could be with some aboriginal voters, some of whom would have voted for the first time in their lives and would not be certain of what documents they needed to present at the poll.

"Obviously there is still a lot to learn," Joseph said.

Ballot shortage on Beardy's and Okemasis, One Arrow

The Chief of the Ahtahkakoop First Nation also said the polls opened late in his community because the poll supervisor forgot the ballots at home. Ballots also ran out temporarily on the One Arrow and Beardy's and Okemasis First Nations.

Kevin Seesequasis, a member of Beardy's and a member of the national board of the Liberal Party, didn't express the same concerns. He said Elections Canada did a good job of getting new ballots quickly.

"They had ballots within, I believe at the very least an hour."

"We saw indigenous mobilization at a level that you haven't seen ever before and indigenous peoples recognizing and realizing that their voice has sway." -
Source

He said Elections Canada told him the turnout in Beardy's was "phenomenal", something that makes him proud, even though he was disappointed to see Conservative Kelly Block re-elected in his riding of Carlton Trail-Eagle Creek.

"I think we saw indigenous mobilization at a level that you haven't seen ever before and indigenous peoples recognizing and realizing that their voice has sway in the federal political process, and that is a good thing."

When it comes to running out of ballots, Elections Canada told CBC that there were provisions in place to make sure anyone who wanted to cast a ballot, would have been able to.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/several-sask-polling-stations-short-on-ballots-as-aboriginal-voters-show-up-in-droves-1.3281008>

Aboriginal voter turnout up in Sault

Sarah Petz

Wednesday, October 21, 2015 3:14:05 EDT PM



The countdown is on to Monday's federal election.

A local push to encourage First Nations citizens to vote appears to have been successful.

According to Rally the First Nations Vote, a Sault Ste. Marie-based campaign to mobilize Aboriginal voters, approximately 500 people voted in Garden River First Nation out of 780 registered to vote. The number of voters in Batchewana First Nation wasn't available, but 396 people had registered.

That's compared to just 300 voters from Garden River First Nation and less than 100 people from Batchewana who voted in the 2011 election. This also doesn't take into account urban Aboriginal voters who cast their ballots at polling stations in Sault Ste. Marie.

Tyrone Souliere, organizer of Rally the First Nations Vote, called the turnout "very encouraging".

"There was a bit of a buzz in the polling stations when I was there. People were kind of excited to vote it seemed. There was an optimistic air," he said.

"This is our first attempt in terms of having a push at organizing voters, and we feel that it's just going to multiply in terms of future elections because we have an idea now that it can be done."

Dean Sayers, chief of Batchewana First Nations, said he believes the turnout was a response to the Conservative government's attitude and treatment of First Nations people over their nearly 10 years in power.

"What I think happened in the last couple years was the continued erosion of our quality of life due to the imposition of legislation without our consent. The Harper government had really taken a paternalistic attitude towards us, and prescribed for us so many things that had a detrimental effect on our communal way of life," Sayers said.

“Our people realized that and recognized that, so I can see that was a big impetus for this movement to vote in Canada's election.”

Sayers said the Liberal win “makes our work a little easier” in terms of improving the quality of life for indigenous people.

“We've just not had a very willing party on the other side of the table,” he said.

“Mr. Trudeau has really signalled a lot of the necessary positions and statements on behalf of the Canadian government that really I think aligns the Canadian government with our aspirations.”

He added that he’s looking forward to seeing whether the Liberal government lives up to their pledges to address the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women, remove the cap on funding for educational support for First Nations, and invest in aboriginal employment and training initiatives.

Sayers also said he feels Sault Ste. Marie’s MP designate Terry Sheehan “has a real appetite to understand and learn who we are as native people, and understand the commitments his government has inherited.”

“I have a real feeling of optimism, I have a feeling of teamwork as a result of the commitments that he’s made to me,” Sayers said.

In a prepared statement, Paul Syrette, chief of Garden River First Nation, said the community views the Liberals’ election to power “as a new beginning for First Nations peoples across the country and an opportunity to reset the relationship with our people and move in a direction built upon mutual respect and understanding.”

He also congratulated Sheehan on his win, saying he sees him “as a key player in advancing the aspirations and needs of First Nations in our areas,” adding that the First Nation hopes the Liberal government “honors the spirit and intent of our Treaties as mentioned by the Prime Minister-elect in his victory speech.”

“We are prepared and ready to do our part and look forward to meet with our MP and the new prime minister,” he said.

Direct Link: <http://www.saultstar.com/2015/10/20/aboriginal-voter-turnout-up-in-sault>

What a Liberal majority means to First Nations

Core issues prevalent in First Nations need to be addressed in first 100 days, says Pam Palmater

By Tiar Wilson, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 21, 2015 5:00 AM ET Last Updated: Oct 21, 2015 10:39 AM ET



In his victory speech Monday, Liberal Party Leader Justin Trudeau spoke of 'a renewed nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples.' (Nicholas Kamm/AFP/Getty Images)

When Pam Palmater heard Justin Trudeau, Canada's next prime minister, speak about a "renewed nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples that respects rights and honours treaties," in his victory speech Monday, she says she had mixed feelings of hope and skepticism.

"It has to be a wait and see, because political promises are worth nothing until they are realized," said Palmater, who is a Mi'kmaq lawyer and chair of Indigenous Governance at Ryerson University in Toronto.

"I am practical. I look at the history of the Liberals. I mean, murdered and missing indigenous women just didn't become an issue, it's been an issue for decades," said Palmater.

As part of his campaign, Trudeau promised to [call an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women](#), to spend [\\$2.6 billion over four years](#) for on reserve education and to [end all boil-water advisories in First Nations](#) in five years.

But Palmater has not forgotten about the White Paper, the two per cent cap on education and the issue of bad water on reserves.



Rhonda Head is seen outside the polling station in the Opaskwayak Cree Nation holding up a sign with the hashtag #rockthevote. (Facebook)

"All of the problems the First Nations have are equally contributed to [by] the Conservative and Liberal governments."

Palmater said the first 100 days are crucial. She wants Trudeau to act now on what she calls a "national crisis" on core issues that are prevalent in most First Nations across the country.

"We really need to save our people. We really need to get our kids out of foster care, we need to get our people out of prisons and we need to restore some resemblance of justice in our communities."

Dealing with trauma after trauma

Rhonda Head has lived on the Opaskwayak Cree Nation, in northern Manitoba, for most of her life.

"I'm hoping that Justin Trudeau helps us with the healing for the trauma that was imposed on us by past governments," Head said.

Head points to the refusal by the former government to declare the residential school system a cultural genocide, despite both the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and United Nations stating this was the case.

Head said she sees the results of those traumas in "high alcoholism, high apprehension, and the jails are filled with First Nations people. Of course, there's also the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women."

Head was a believer of the social media trend, "Anyone But Conservatives." It's what got her involved in Indigenous Rock the Vote. She was part of a crew that drove hundreds of First Nations people to the polls on Oct. 19.

Opaskwayak Cree Nation, which is in the Churchill- Keewatinook Aski riding, saw a 50 per cent increase in voter turnout. Nikki Ashton held her NDP seat, but Head is hopeful that Trudeau will live up to his campaign promises.

Closing the gap

National Chief Perry Bellegarde says the way forward is through co-operation and collaboration.

"It's positive. It's all about communication and access. That's the first step," Bellegarde said. He noted that Trudeau will be the only prime minister to mention a nation-to-nation relationship. "We are going to build upon that."

Bellegarde wants to close the gap between Canada and First Nations people.

"That gap represents the cap on education, that gap represents the overcrowded housing, that gap represents the high suicide rate, that gap represents 132 communities with boil-water advisories. It also represents the high disproportionate rate of incarceration," Bellegarde said.

"When the prime minister-elect talks about closing the gap, that's a positive statement, very strong."

Strategic voting at play

That promise of a nation-to-nation relationship is what convinced Peter Campbell from North Spirit Lake First Nation to campaign for the Liberal Party within the Kenora riding.

"I went with Bob Nault to five reserves as he was trying to muster up some support," Campbell said.

Nault was the Liberal MP in the riding for 16 years and served as Indian affairs minister from 1999 to 2003. [In January, he put his name forward once again](#), after losing the seat to the Conservatives over 10 years ago.

Campbell knows Nault's record in dealing with First Nations issues isn't favourable. However, he chose to take a strategic approach.

"Do you want your MP to be sitting across the aisle or do you want your MP to be inside with the governing power?"

And now that Nault will be part of a majority government, Campbell is expecting him to turn his attention to indigenous issues, including the boil-water advisories in First Nations communities.

Trudeau is expected to appoint his cabinet on Nov. 4.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/what-a-liberal-majority-means-to-first-nations-1.3281061>

Paul Martin praises Justin Trudeau's commitment to First Nations communities

Former prime minister was in Montreal to mark launch of Cree School Board's 2-day education symposium

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 21, 2015 6:10 PM ET Last Updated: Oct 21, 2015 6:10 PM ET



Former prime minister Paul Martin says better education for First Nations students is critical to Canada's future success. (CBC)

Former prime minister Paul Martin praised prime minister-designate Justin Trudeau for his pledge to invest \$2.6 billion in the education system for First Nations communities.

Martin made the remarks in Montreal on Wednesday, at the launch of a two-day symposium on education organized by the Cree School Board.

"First Nations are the youngest and fastest growing segment of our population. Their education is crucial if Canada is going to succeed. I know that Justin Trudeau understands that, and that's why he made the proposal that he did during the election campaign," Martin said.



Members of the Cree School board launched a 2-day education symposium in Montreal on Wednesday with former prime minister Paul Martin (second from left). (Antoni Nerestant/CBC)

The former prime minister founded Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative, an organization aimed at helping to boost the graduation rates of aboriginal Canadians and to improve their education system.

"In today's world, the ability to succeed is totally dependent on the amount of education that you have, and that's going to [be the case] more and more because in the kind of world in which we live, more jobs are going to require increasing levels of education," he said.

"Those who live within the radius of the Cree School Board are very, very fortunate because you've got one of the best aboriginal school systems in the country."

Martin said Trudeau's \$2.6-billion investment would mean drastic improvements in education outcomes for First Nations communities.

"The expertise is there to make sure the investment is put to good use."

Martin also said he supports Trudeau's plan to run a deficit for the next three years, adding that as long as investments are made in the right places — infrastructure, education and research and development — the economy can grow stronger and future deficits can be avoided.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/paul-martin-praises-justin-trudeau-s-commitment-to-first-nations-communities-1.3282737>

Yukon First Nations hold Liberals to S-6 promise

Lawsuit would be dropped if new government repeals legislation, one chief says



From left: Steve Smith, chief of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations; Eric Fairclough, chief of Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation, and Carl Sidney, chief of the Teslin Tlingit Council, announcing their lawsuit against the federal government on Oct. 14. (Nancy Thomson/CBC)

Yukon First Nations leaders say they're pleased with Monday's election outcome, and they now expect action to repeal Bill S-6.

The Conservative government legislation, [passed earlier this year](#), amends Yukon's Environmental and Socio-economic Act. Yukon First Nations fought the bill, saying it undermines their final agreements. Just days before the election, three First Nations [launched a court challenge](#).

The Liberals, however, ran on a campaign that promised to repeal the offending legislation.

"We're going to hold them to their commitment," said Eric Fairclough, chief of the Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation. It's one of the First Nations named in the suit against the federal government.

Fairclough also signaled that the lawsuit could be shelved.



'We're going to hold them to their commitment,' Fairclough said. (Cheryl Kawaja/CBC)

"It could really mean we'd be saving the taxpayers a whole lot of money, by not going through the major court system," he said.

Fairclough was among the celebrants at Yukon Liberal candidate Larry Bagnell's victory party on election night. Steve Smith, chief of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, and Kwanlin Dün Chief Doris Bill were also there.

"Feels like we've got our country back," Smith said, calling the Liberal win "uplifting."

Bill agreed and said the election may mark a "turning point" for aboriginal people.

"First Nations people across the country, indigenous people across the country, came out in droves, I believe," Bill said.

"I think we made a difference."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/yukon-first-nations-liberal-government-bill-s6-1.3282267>

Maliseet chiefs split from Assembly of First Nations Chiefs in New Brunswick

Maliseet First Nations will form their own group

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 21, 2015 5:06 PM AT Last Updated: Oct 21, 2015 7:05 PM AT



"The Mi'kmaq have their area of concerns with the government and industry, and we have ours," said Chief Gabby Atwin of the Kingsclear First Nation .

The Assembly of First Nations Chiefs in New Brunswick has split, and the chiefs of the Maliseet First Nations in the province have announced they are forming their own group.

Various reasons are being given, but it's clear the division is between the Maliseet and Mi'kmaq First Nations chiefs in the province.

Ross Perley, the chief of the Tobique First Nation, released a statement blaming the split on a lack of results on some major projects.

"We felt the AFNCNB failed to communicate effectively with grassroots community members, and that expected deliverables on several important files were not being met," read Perley's statement.

Kingsclear First Nation Chief Gabby Atwin had a different explanation, saying it was more a matter of geography.

'We want to be united when we talk to the government.' - *Chief Gabby Atwin, Kingsclear First Nation*

Maliseet First Nations are in the west and northwest of the province, whereas Mi'kmaq First Nations are in the east and north.

"I just believe, in my opinion, that us working collectively in the same territory, it just seems that we have the same interests," said Atwin.

"The Mi'kmaq have their area of concerns with the government and industry, and we have ours, so we want to be united when we talk to the government," he explained.

Major industrial projects in Maliseet areas include the proposed Sisson Brook tungsten mine and Energy East pipeline.

Atwin said it is a concern that any group dealing with such industries should speak with one voice.

"We want to meet with them on a collective front, a united front, because they are entering our territory," he said. "Like mines or a pipeline, whatever it is."



Alma Brooks, St. Mary's First Nation elder (CBC)

Alma Brooks, an elder at St. Mary's First Nation, has been highly critical of the AFNCNB speaking for Maliseet First Nations.

St. Mary's was never a member of the organization, but Brooks believes they will join this new one.

"We are meeting together," said Brooks. "Maliseet bands, and the Maliseet Grand Council, to talk about uniting, a unity that will involve the people ... not just the chiefs."

"The Assembly was more or less just the chiefs," she added.

Mi'kmaq First Nations chiefs have also said they will form their own organization. Spokesman George Ginnish, chief of Eel Ground First Nation, did not want to comment to CBC News.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/maliseet-mi-kmaq-assembly-split-1.3282437>

4 first-time First Nations voters: why they voted, what they hope for

I am relieved,' says first-time voter Grand Chief Derek Nepinak

By Angela Sterritt, [for CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 20, 2015 8:32 PM ET Last Updated: Oct 22, 2015 9:49 AM ET



Activist Savvy Simon, right, was named as one of Canadian Living's top 40 female change-makers, but she had never voted in a federal election until now. She and her partner headed to the polls together in Halifax on Monday. (Supplied)

Today, some of the most politically active people in indigenous country are reflecting on how casting a vote for the first time may have changed the nation.

A 27-year-old Mohawk youth from Six Nations and a veteran band councillor and grandmother from the Squamish Nation were among those marking an X on a federal ballot for the first time on Monday, in hopes of voting in a new government.

"Something that definitely inspired me in this election was seeing my native brothers and sisters awaking across Canada to vote, and a lot of them were voting for the first time too," said activist and first time voter Savvy Simon

Even prominent leaders like Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde and Grand Chief Derek Nepinak of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs took to the ballots for the first time.

Here are four first-time voters on why they voted and what they hope for with the new government.

Derek Nepinak

Derek Nepinak is far from a newbie to politics. The grand chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs has taken the reins on pulling First Nations communities out of third-party management and housing deficits and has helped build revenues for communities.



Derek Nepinak, a member of the Pine Creek First Nation, has been grand chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs since 2011. (CBC)

But voting in a federal election was never a priority.

"I believed that voting was an affront to my own understanding of sovereignty," he said. "My focus was and is on building on our own inherent and treaty rights to be self-governing."

In this election, Nepinak said he felt a sense of urgency to make some "breathing room" by pushing back a government he saw as indifferent and abrasive towards Indigenous people.

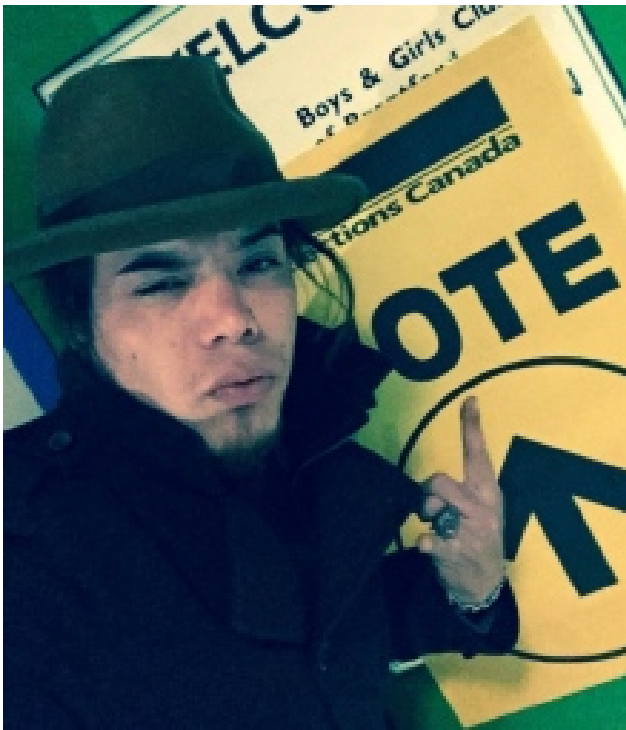
"This pushback could be accomplished by removing the Harper government," he said.

Nepinak voted for the NDP, which was endorsed by the Assembly of First Nations, and chose Daniel Blaikie, who won in the Elmwood–Transcona riding.

"Today I'm feeling relieved. But tomorrow, it's time to roll up the sleeves and figure out what my responsibilities will be," said Nepinak.

Logan Staats

For Six Nations Mohawk Logan Staats, age 27, voting is not just about trusting politicians — it's about going against the grain of his community.



While Logan Staats voted in federal elections for the first time on Monday, supporting political and social movements in his communities has been a big part of his life. (Supplied)

"I was raised traditionally and voting always kind of had a stigma in my community. But after Harper's last two terms, I decided I could not sit by idly while my community suffered and faced assimilation," Staats said.

While he voted in federal elections for the first time on Monday, supporting political and social movements in his communities has been a big part of his life. He has taken part in vigils and events for missing and murdered indigenous women. He also participates regularly on the Mohawk youth council.

But the Liberal victory doesn't mean much for him. Staats calls it the difference between selecting "Pepsi or Coke," but he still has hope.

"I guess we will see and time will tell," he said.

"I'm hoping that he's [Trudeau] a man of his word, I'm hoping First Nations people can cultivate a positive relationship with our new prime minister, I'm hoping we can find some sort of justice, for our missing sisters."

Deborah Baker

Deborah Baker lives on the Capilano reserve in West Vancouver. She has cast a ballot to elect chief and council members for the Squamish Nation since she was 18 years old. She's been elected councilor for three terms. But until this election, she had never participated in federal politics.



'I was never encouraged to vote as a young adult and I never encouraged my adult children until now,' said Deborah Baker. (Supplied)

"I believed we as First Nations would not be heard either way," she said. "I was never encouraged to vote as a young adult and I never encouraged my adult children until now."

Baker says this time she voted on behalf of herself to "ensure Stephen Harper was not re-elected." She was concerned that environmental and human rights issues were not being addressed.

She voted for NDP candidate Larry Coopman in the West Vancouver–Sunshine Coast–Sea to Sky Country riding. The Liberals got in.

"I feel hopeful ... but cautious," said Baker.

She said she was drawn to the NDP's platform for its commitment to missing and murdered Indigenous women and to implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations.

"So it will be interesting to see how the Liberals address those two important areas," she said.

Savvy Simon

Savvy Simon, 28, is Mi'kmaq from Elsipogtog, and acted as a prayer warrior during the 2013 blockades in Elsipogtog to prevent shale gas exploration.



Savvy Simon says she is thrilled there will be a change in government. (Supplied)

She was named as one of Canadian Living's top 40 female change-makers. But she had never voted in a federal election — until now.

"In the past, there have been a lot of broken promises. I didn't want to vote for somebody if I didn't know truly what they stood for," she said.

This time was different. She and her partner had a "vote date" and took to the polls together in Halifax.

Simon voted for NDP candidate Joanne Hussey in Halifax West. The Liberal candidate won.

Simon said she is thrilled there will be a change in government, but she is apprehensive about how many Liberal MPs are in.

"But I am going to stick to hope and the fact that we have a few aboriginal members in Parliament," she said. "I feel that we will be heard and positive change will happen in our communities."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/4-first-time-first-nations-voters-1.3281062>

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami lays out 5 key priorities for parliament

Language preservation, suicide prevention, aboriginal education, cited as priorities by ITK president

By Elyse Skura, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 21, 2015 1:07 PM CT Last Updated: Oct 21, 2015 1:07 PM CT



Natan Obed, the president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, says Inuit across Canada are facing some complex systemic problems, but there are a number of issues he hopes the new government will take immediate action to address. (Mitchel Wiles/CBC)

When the 43rd Parliament of Canada sits, there will be a record number of aboriginal MPs and a prime minister who has pledged to renew a ["nation-to-nation relationship"](#) with indigenous people.

Natan Obed, the newly elected president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, hopes the change will bring with it a renewed dedication to tackling systemic issues facing Inuit across the country.

While large-scale issues, such as food insecurity and housing shortages may take time to address, Obed says there are "a number of things" Ottawa can take action on right away.

Suicide prevention

With the suicide rate among Inuit radically higher than average, Obed hopes the new government will create a national suicide strategy.

In Nunavut, where residents are 10 times more likely to take their own lives, [the chief coroner called an inquest](#) to look into the issue.

"It's an issue that affects all of us and it's an issue that we can make a positive difference on if we invest and if we put the time and effort into it," Obed says.

He has also pledged to "finalize and release" an Inuit-specific national strategy during his first nine months as president.

"From a moral standpoint, we just have to do this."

Aboriginal education

During the election campaign, prime minister-designate Justin Trudeau pledged to [boost spending for First Nations education](#), in a move designed to address quality of life issues for people living in indigenous communities.

But Obed says the government needs to understand that this is a complex issue.

"First Nations, Métis and Inuit all have different education systems and different needs," he says.

Inuit have some of the lowest high school graduation rates in the country and schools in Nunavut continue to struggle with poor attendance rates.

Obed says the government needs to find a way to close the gap, "whether it's access to more funding, the creation of a university in the Arctic, improvements of outcomes for K to 12, a bilingual education system which focuses on Inuktitut as one of the primary languages of instruction, or universal early childhood education."

National MMIW inquiry

Trudeau told reporters on Tuesday that he will move "quickly" to call a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women.

For some voters, [this was a wedge issue](#) during the lengthy campaign, with both the Liberals, NDP and Greens all pledging to call for an inquiry and the Conservatives maintaining it wasn't necessary.

Obed says he hopes an inquiry will bring some clarity to those who have lost loved ones, but he also wants to make sure it will elicit positive changes for life in Inuit communities.

"I hope that it's going to be fair and inclusive and that the Inuit regions in Canada can also participate fully," he says.

"We know that women and children are the most vulnerable parts of our society, especially in Inuit society. And we need to do more to ensure safety and also prosperity."

Truth and Reconciliation

When the Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its final report in June, [Trudeau pledged his "unwavering" support](#) for its recommendations.

Now, Obed hopes the Liberal leader will address all of those 94 recommendations.

"This is a great opportunity," Obed says. "There actually is a very clear roadmap that has buy-in from across the different aboriginal groups in Canada, from Métis to First Nations and Inuit."

Language preservation

Supporting the revitalization of aboriginal languages, including Inuit languages, is also one of Obed's key issues.

"There's power and healing and wisdom in our language that we need to preserve," he says, adding that people who are fluent in their native language are often happier, healthier and have a better sense of identity.

"Hopefully [it's] something I can work on with the federal government in a way that has never been worked on before," Obed says.

"So that there is parity in the way in which the federal government funds Inuktitut versus the way that it funds other languages in Canada, such as French or English."

Obed, who has received some criticism for his [inability to speak fluent Inuktitut](#), adds that everyone can fight for language revitalization, regardless of their proficiency in their native language.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/inuit-tapiriit-kanatami-lays-out-5-key-priorities-for-parliament-1.3281505>

Inuit orgs congratulate federal election winners

QIA president “confident” Tootoo will bring positive changes

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, October 21, 2015 - 4:00 pm



Sophie Grégoire, the wife of Liberal Party leader Justin Trudeau, with Trudeau, who holds his youngest child Hadrien, and Liberal candidate Hunter Tootoo at Iqaluit's Rotary Park Oct. 10. Nine days later,

Tootoo emerged as Nunavut's next MP and Trudeau emerged as Canada's next prime minister. (PHOTO BY STEVE DUCHARME)

(Updated Oct. 21, 6:20 p.m.)

In optimistic statements released Oct. 20, Inuit organizations have offered their congratulations to victorious federal candidates in Canada's four Inuit regions.

P.J. Akeegok, the president of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, congratulated Nunavut's MP-elect, Liberal Hunter Tootoo, who scored an [easy victory Oct. 19](#) by taking 47.2 per cent of ballots cast.

"I am confident that Mr. Tootoo's leadership and experience will influence positive changes for Nunavummiut. I look forward to working with Mr. Tootoo for the promotion and protection of Inuit rights and values," Akeegok said.

Akeegok also thanked the defeated Conservative incumbent, Leona Aglukkaq, who finished in third place with 24.8 per cent of the vote.

"QIA is grateful for Ms. Leona Aglukkaq's tireless efforts in her tenure as the Nunavut MP since 2008," Akeegok said.

Also on Oct. 20, Natan Obed, the president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, said he looks forward to working with Justin Trudeau's new Liberal government.

ITK also pointed out that in response to a questionnaire, the Liberal party said they are committed to "a renewed, respectful and inclusive nation-to-nation Kelowna process to advance progress on critical issues such as housing, infrastructure, health and mental health care, poverty, food security, child welfare, economic opportunity and education."

Obed also congratulated the four MPs who will represent the four Inuit Nunangat regions: Liberal Michael McLeod (Northwest Territories), Liberal Hunter Tootoo (Nunavut), Liberal Yvonne Jones (Labrador) and the NDP's Romeo Saganash (Abitibi-Baie-James-Nunavik-Eeyou.)

At the same time, he thanked two defeated MPs — Aglukkaq and the veteran NDP MP, Dennis Bevington, who lost his Northwest Territories seat — "for their commitment to the Arctic and their service to Inuit."

Pauktuutit, the national Inuit women's association, congratulated Trudeau and the Liberal Party of Canada in their own statement Oct. 20.

And, referring to a Liberal election promise, the organization's "immediate priority" is to ensure that Inuit are "equitably included" in an inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women, Pauktuutit's president, Rebecca Kudloo, said in a statement.

“I know Mr. Trudeau has a sincere love for the North and for Inuit, and I look forward to being fully consulted on the scope, mandate and equitable inclusion of Inuit, as well as immediate measures that can be implemented on an urgent basis,” Kudloo said.

Kudloo pointed out that Inuit women live in regions with the highest rates of violence in the country.

“I look forward to working with Prime Minister Trudeau and his officials to help develop and implement effective safety measures for Inuit women and children,” Kudloo said in a statement.

She also said there are “significant gaps” in the health and well-being of Inuit and that she wants to “renew” discussions with the federal government to talk about restoring funding that has been cut.

Nunavut Premier Peter Taptuna offered his own congratulations Oct. 21 in a statement in the Nunavut legislature.

“This is a new page for Canada,” Taptuna said.

In response to a question from Iqaluit-Niaqunnguut MLA Pat Angnakak, Taptuna said he wants to meet with Trudeau soon after his new government is sworn in.

Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. has yet to release a formal statement of congratulations to the new Liberal government and prime minister.

But on the morning of Oct. 21, James Eetoolook, the vice president of NTI, said he likes what he has heard from Trudeau.

“I am grateful for what our new prime minister has mentioned and what he said has to become reality,” Eetoolook said.

Eetoolook also said he hopes that Tootoo will fight for indigenous causes in Ottawa.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674inuit_orgs_congratulates_federal_election_winners/

Iqaluit municipal election saw high youth voter turnout

Mayor-elect Madeleine Redfern hopes election interest will lead to participation in civic life

By Kieran Oudshoorn, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 21, 2015 4:22 PM CT Last Updated: Oct 21, 2015 5:09 PM CT

On Monday, nearly 1,700 Iqaluit residents turned out to elect a new mayor and council, so many in fact that election officials, who had planned for only 1,100 voters, had to print more ballots.

Iqaluit's chief returning officer Tania Scott says voters were not only out in larger numbers than usual, they were also younger.



Maatalii Okalik, the president of National Inuit Youth Council, says she hopes the strong youth turnout in Iqaluit's municipal election will be mirrored in upcoming hamlet elections across Nunavut. (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

"There were a lot of new voters that came to register," she said.

"They were all about 18. They came with their parents; they came with their relatives. Came by themselves even."

One of those young voters was Leevee Naglingniq.

"I think there are issues that older people may not know about and some candidates may not know either," she says.

That is a concern shared by Maatalii Okalik, the president of National Inuit Youth Council. She is hopeful the strong youth turnout in Iqaluit's municipal election will be mirrored in upcoming hamlet elections across Nunavut.

"Inuit youth form a majority of the population of Inuit across Inuit Nunangat," Okalik said. "The vote can be decided by the Inuit youth vote."



Iqaluit's mayor-elect Madeleine Redfern says she is happy with the youth turnout but that voting is just the first step, and the next is participation in civic life, including running in elections as a candidate. (Kieran Oudshoorn/CBC)

Iqaluit's mayor-elect Madeleine Redfern is known for using social media to connect with voters, including youth.

She said she is happy with the youth turnout but says voting is just the first step.

"The more that they participate in things like elections, the more they are going to participate all aspects of civic life, whether it's volunteering at the women's shelter or at the soup kitchen or running for elections.

"At the end of the day, we are all in this together and the youth are a big part of our community."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/iqaluit-municipal-election-saw-high-youth-voter-turnout-1.3282770>

First Nations look forward to new relationship with Ottawa: Chiefs

Expectations are high for the incoming Liberals, starting with push for inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women.



Prime minister-designate Justin Trudeau attends his first official news conference at the National Press Theatre in Ottawa, Oct.20, 2015. First Nations look forward to a new relationship with the incoming Liberal government.

By: Chinta Puxley The Canadian Press, Published on Tue Oct 20 2015

WINNIPEG — Some First Nations leaders say the federal election awoke a sleeping giant that the incoming Liberal government will have to contend with — starting with an inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Voter turnout spiked by up to 20 per cent in some largely aboriginal ridings. Chiefs said Tuesday the higher turnout helped [drive the Conservatives from office](#) after almost a decade and bring about the prospect of a new, respectful relationship with Ottawa.

A jubilant Grand Chief Derek Nepinak with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs called it “a great day.”

“I feel a lot of relief from the years of very purposeful oppression that was brought forward from the previous government,” Nepinak said.

“Mr. Harper, when he was prime minister, awoke a sleeping giant in our people. That giant is awake and the new Liberal majority government is going to have to deal with a giant in the indigenous people of these lands.”

In the riding of Churchill-Keewatinook Aski, which covers much of Manitoba’s north, chiefs said turnout was up by more than 11,000 voters — an increase of 20 per cent from 2011. Some polling stations on reserves worried the high turnout would lead to their running out of ballots, which prompted last-minute calls to Elections Canada.

Elections Canada said Tuesday it hadn’t calculated aboriginal voter turnout yet.

Expectations of a new Liberal government are high. Chiefs have a list of issues they want addressed. At the top is an inquiry into Canada’s estimated 1,200 missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Grand Chief Sheila North Wilson, who represents [northern First Nations in Manitoba](#), said people are looking for an inquiry to be called within the first 100 days of Justin

Trudeau's mandate. The families of those who have lost loved ones must be the driving force, she said.

"There are many things that we're hearing from our own families of why they see these problems," said North Wilson, who is with Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak. "A lot of it has to do with poverty, lack of education and even just the complete disregard for our people."

Kevin Hart, Manitoba regional chief with the Assembly of First Nations, said his people woke up with a sense of relief and look forward to working with Ottawa. Housing, clean water, equal education funding and resource-sharing for First Nations communities are all top priorities, he said.

"Change was needed. Fear-mongering, hate literature and hate campaigns against ethnic groups across Canada failed. True Canadians came out and showed support," Hart said.

Hopes are high among northern Ontario aboriginals as well.

Chief Erwin Redsky of the Shoal Lake 40 First Nation on the Manitoba-Ontario boundary said turnout was up in 40 First Nations within the riding of Kenora. Redsky said it was at least 90 per cent on his reserve, which has been under a boil-water advisory for 17 years and has been fighting for a rudimentary all-weather road.

Greg Rickford, who was natural resources minister, lost his seat to former Liberal Indian Affairs Minister Bob Nault in a tough three-way race. People were engaged this time around, Redsky said, especially when they heard promises of a new nation-to-nation relationship with Canada.

"I asked my wife to pinch me," Redsky said. "I thought I'd never hear that ... We look forward to this new era. The work has just begun."

Direct Link: <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/10/20/first-nations-look-forward-to-new-relationship-with-ottawa-chiefs.html>

Aboriginal Sports

North Shore soccer tourney to honour First Nations pioneer

by [Martin Dunphy](#) on October 16th, 2015 at 4:13 PM
SHARED 60



First Nations soccer pioneer Harry Manson's legacy will be honoured with a coed tournament on October 17.

An inaugural soccer tournament to be held tomorrow (Saturday, October 17) will commemorate the legacy of a First Nations pioneer in the sport.

The Harry Manson Legacy tournament, which will get underway at the John Braithwaite Community Centre in North Vancouver at 1 p.m., will feature four coed teams playing five per side in abbreviated 24-minute games.

Two teams from the Street Soccer League will take part (one affiliated with the North Shore Salvation Army and another with the Downtown Eastside's Portland Hotel Society), as well as a unit from the Native Education College. A team organized through the auspices of the City of Vancouver, possibly containing two great-grandchildren of Harry Manson's, is also scheduled to compete.

The intent of the competition, as stated by founding organization Friends of Harry Manson and cofounder Robert Janning in a release, is to "redress the legacy of colonialism in British Columbia" and "to honour the outstanding First Nations sportsman" Harry Manson.

"We hope this tournament will contribute to breaking down the last remaining barriers that continue, in very subtle ways, to segregate the First Nations of British Columbia from the wider provincial soccer community," the release stated.

Manson, a member of the Snuneymuxw First Nation in Nanaimo on Vancouver Island at the turn of the past century, was the captain of the indigenous Nanaimo Indian Wanderers soccer team from 1897 to 1908. He was also the only player, regardless of race, to play for the Wanderers and both the Nanaimo Thistles and Nanaimo United during those years.



Harry Manson, second from right, bottom row, 1903 photo.

During the time period that Manson played, open discrimination and racism against aboriginal people was common in B.C. Despite reported calls to "Kill the savages" yelled out during matches between his First Nations team and those comprised of players of European descent, Manson was widely recognized for his skill on the soccer pitch.

Largely through [the efforts](#) of B.C. soccer researcher Janning—who has written a history of provincial soccer, *Westcoast Reign: The British Columbia Soccer Championships 1892-1905*—Manson became inducted into three separate sports halls of fame in Canada within seven months in 2014 and 2015: the Canadian Soccer Hall of Fame, the Nanaimo Sports Hall of Fame, and Canada's Sports Hall of Fame.

The B.C. Sports Hall of Fame has not inducted Manson despite two applications.

Teams in the Harry Manson Legacy tournament will be competing for the historic Grand Challenge Cup of the Nanaimo Football Association, a trophy originally commissioned in 1891, which makes it one year older than the revered Stanley Cup. Manson won the cup as a member of Nanaimo United in 1903; he was one of three indigenous players on that team, and they were the first to win a provincial championship.

"And everybody gets a medal," Janning told the *Straight* by phone of the tournament's participants.

"I think that the example Harry Manson set during that period of racism...was that he kind of ignored all that. He just went out and played soccer. He didn't care if he was playing with white people or indigenous people."

Manson, whose Snuneymuxw name was Xul-si-malt (meaning "One who leaves his mark"), died in a trainyard accident in Nanaimo in 1912, age 32, while in town to get medicine for his sick child.

All are welcome to attend and watch the tournament on Saturday. The final game is scheduled for 3:45 p.m., with the awards presentation taking place immediately afterward.

The John Braithwaite Community Centre is located at 145 West 1st Street, North Vancouver.

Direct Link: <http://www.straight.com/news/558186/north-shore-soccer-tourney-honour-first-nations-pioneer>

Energy, the Environment & Natural Resources

Clyde River wants Supreme Court to weigh in on seismic testing

Lawyer Nader Hasan says this is a 'David vs Goliath' fight, but Clyde River will keep fighting

By Elyse Skura, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 16, 2015 1:06 PM CT Last Updated: Oct 16, 2015 1:06 PM CT



Clyde River, Nunavut, is still fighting to stop a consortium of companies from conducting seismic testing in the waters nearby the community. The hamlet fears the blasts from the air guns used in the tests will scare away, hurt or even kill marine wildlife Inuit rely on. (Jordan Konek/CBC)

The Nunavut hamlet of Clyde River has filed an application for leave to appeal its seismic testing challenge to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Last year, the National Energy Board granted a permit to a consortium of three companies, TGS-NOPEC Geophysical Company ASA, Petroleum GeoServices and

MultiKlient Invest AS to conduct the tests in the Davis Strait, up and down the length of Baffin Island.

In August, the Federal Court of Appeal denied Clyde River's request for a judicial review of that decision.

"We're up against opponents with essentially unlimited resources: two billion-dollar oil companies and the Government of Canada," said Nader Hasan, the lawyer representing the hamlet.

"It really is a David versus Goliath kind of fight, but we feel like we have justice on our side and we're going to continue fighting."



The cost of food in the Nunavut hamlet is high, making this issue about 'food security,' argues lawyer Nader Hasan. (David Michael Lamb/CBC)

Seismic testing involves the use of air guns to search for oil and gas deposits.

Inuit fear that these extremely loud guns have the potential to scare off, injure or even kill the marine mammals they rely on as a traditional food source.

'It's a no-brainer'

For Canada's highest court to take the case, Clyde River will have to convince it of two things: the Federal Court of Appeal made the wrong decision in this case and the issues the case deals with are of national importance.

"With respect to the seismic testing case, our view is that it's a no-brainer that this is an issue of national importance," said Hasan.

"There was a lot riding on this case for the Inuit of Nunavut."

The hamlet is arguing the National Energy Board failed in its duty to meaningfully consult Inuit before granting the testing permit.

Hasan says the Federal Court of Appeal agreed that, given the potentially devastating effect of the tests on local Inuit, the duty to consult was at its highest.

"Despite accepting that argument, the Federal Court of Appeal went on to conclude that what the Inuit got was high level consultation. And we know that's just not true."

Hasan says it is hard to predict if the Supreme Court of Canada will agree to hear the case, as it takes only a small number of cases every year.

If the hamlet does not get its day in court, Hasan says the Federal Court of Appeal's decision will be the lasting precedent — which could have a "huge effect" on the duty to consult aboriginal people on major extraction projects.

But for the people of Clyde River, where the cost of food is far higher than in most of southern Canada, Hasan says the case is of the utmost importance right now.

"If seismic testing harms [marine] animals or drives them away or kills them, you're looking not just at an economical disaster, but a human disaster.

"What's at stake for the people of Clyde River is food security."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/clyde-river-wants-supreme-court-to-weigh-in-on-seismic-testing-1.3274901>

Hydro-Québec begins cleaning up 'enormous' fuel spill dating back to '70s

1.7 million litres of fuel soaked into the soil near what is now the Chisasibi airport

By Betsy Longchap, Jaime Little, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 16, 2015 11:07 AM CT Last Updated: Oct 16, 2015 11:07 AM CT



In the 1970s, 1.7 million litres of fuel soaked into the soil near what is now the Chisasibi airport. (submitted by Mina Bearskin)

A decades-old contaminated site near the James Bay Cree community of Chisasibi is finally being cleaned up.

In the 1970s, when Hydro-Québec was building its "project of the century" in northern Quebec, eight containers filled with a total of more than 1.7 million litres of fuel soaked into the soil near what is now the Chisasibi airport.

Between 850 and 1,000 45-gallon drums are also buried at the site.



Between 850 and 1,000 45-gallon drums are also buried at the site. (submitted by Mina Bearskin)

"When the spill was thoroughly assessed, they found out the fuel spill was enormous. More than 5,000 cubic metres of soil was contaminated," says Matthew Chiskamish, Chisasibi's local environmental officer.

"The soil is worthless and cannot be used," he says.

Chiskamish says at the time, there was little concern for the environment. Cree leaders were busy negotiating the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, and planning the relocation of their community to accommodate the hydroelectric megaproject.

Hydro-Québec wrote to the Chisasibi band in 1974, alerting the community of the mess it had created. But it wasn't until about 2005 that elders put pressure on local leaders to get it cleaned up.

Last week, Hydro-Québec, along with the Cree Construction and Development Company, began the four-year process of decontaminating the site.

About 400 dump-truck loads of dirty sand will be dumped at the LG-2 hydroelectric facility, part of the massive hydroelectric project on the La Grande River.

Residents of Chisasibi have been told not to go near the contaminated site, which has been fenced-in during the cleanup.

Chishkamish says workers are focusing on the surface contamination for now, but the whole cleanup will last four summers.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/hydro-qu%C3%A9bec-begins-cleaning-up-enormous-fuel-spill-dating-back-to-70s-1.3274529>

Innu First Nations welcome dismissal of Rio Tinto's lawsuit appeal

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 16, 2015 9:40 AM NT Last Updated: Oct 16, 2015 9:40 AM NT



The Innu First Nations in Quebec welcome a ruling from the Supreme Court of Canada that rejected an appeal from Rio Tinto for a \$900-million lawsuit to be thrown out. (Radio-Canada Archives)

The Supreme Court of Canada has rejected Rio Tinto's appeal to throw out a \$900-million lawsuit filed by Innu First Nations in Quebec.

The lawsuit claimed the Iron Ore Company of Canada, majority owned by Rio Tinto, has violated the rights of the Innu First Nations of Uashat Mak Mani-Utenam (Uashaunnuat) and Matimekush-Lac John for decades.

The Innu Nations said in a statement Rio Tinto and IOC were seeking to "delay the judicial process in the hopes that they would exhaust us," adding it was a strategy they were familiar with.

"This decision by the Supreme Court of Canada means that Rio Tinto (IOC) will no longer be able to evade our lawsuit," said Mike McKenzie, chief of Uashat Mak Mani-Utenam in the statement.

"We are more determined than ever to see it through to the end, and, sooner or later, the company will have to answer for what it has done, including its systematic violation of our rights since the 1950s."

The Innu claim the iron ore mines and other facilities operated by IOC and Rio Tinto have ruined the environment, displaced Innu from their territory and interfered with the traditional way of life.

In addition, the Innu say a 578-kilometre railway between Schefferville and Sept-Îles, Que., has opened their territory up to other destructive development projects.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/innu-first-nations-welcome-dismissal-of-rio-tinto-s-lawsuit-appeal-1.3274026>

Scrap shale gas, First Nations tell provincial commission on Hydraulic Fracturing

Aboriginal group recommends a permanent moratorium

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 15, 2015 10:39 PM AT Last Updated: Oct 15, 2015 10:39 PM AT



Willi Nolan of Harcourt spoke for First Nations people at the New Brunswick Commission on Hydraulic Fracturing meeting in Richibucto (CBC)

In a closed door meeting, members of Elsipogtog First Nation told the New Brunswick Commission on Hydraulic Fracturing they do not want shale gas development in their backyard.

The [New Brunswick Commission on Hydraulic Fracturing](#) met with several groups at the Anchor Community Centre in Richibucto.

"We know the risks of shale gas, they completely outweigh any benefits." - *Willi Nolan, Mi'kmaq spokesperson*

Willi Nolan spoke on behalf of one group made up of several Mi'kmaq residents.

"We're asking that the commission just recommend a permanent moratorium on hydraulic fracturing," said Nolan.

Nolan, who lives in Harcourt, participated in the shale gas protests in the Rexton area in 2013.



Participants at the Commission on Hydraulic Fracturing hearings in Richibucto (Michel Nogue/Radio-Canada)

"We know the risks of shale gas, they completely outweigh any benefits. We know that we got volumes of science on our side. We know that the violations of indigenous rights is unlawful," said Nolan.

The commission was appointed by the provincial government to study the facts and to speak to New Brunswickers about their thoughts on hydraulic fracturing.

Commissioner Marc Léger says he has met with at least 30 groups.



Marc Leger is the commissioner for the hearings into hydraulic fracturing (CBC)

"Our process is to put everything we receive in terms of submissions on our website. So the presentations that we received today will be available within a few days on our website," said Léger.

"People want New Brunswickers to see what they've told us."

The commission will be in Saint John on October 26 to meet with the Aboriginal Business Council, and then in Moncton on October 27.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/first-nations-shale-gas-moratorium-1.3273774>

56 oil drums removed from Iqaluit shoreline

'Successful' cleanup included help from correctional centres

By Jane Sponagle, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 17, 2015 3:40 PM CT Last Updated: Oct 17, 2015 3:40 PM CT



This fall, 20 oil drums were cleaned up from the creek near the Apex beach. (Submitted by Michael Warren)

Iqaluit's shoreline is a little cleaner this fall after 56 oil drums were removed from the beach between the coast guard station and the old cemetery.

"We've had a very successful oil drum clean up this year," said Robyn Campbell, sustainability co-ordinator for the City of Iqaluit.

The city worked on the project with the Qikiqtani Inuit Association and Nunavut's department of environment.

Campbell said when Apex residents heard about the clean up, they wanted the oil drums gone too. Twenty oil drums from the creek by Apex beach were picked up.

The city also worked with the Baffin Correctional Centre and the Makigliarvik Correctional Centre.

"It's a particularly interesting relationship we're building with [correctional centres] for a variety of reasons," said Campbell.

"It's a relationship that's both increasing inmate well-being and pride."

Campbell said the project is also enhancing community beautification and improving community development.

"That's a remarkable feat," she said.

The collected drums are now at the landfill, where Campbell said the materials inside will be identified and treated appropriately.

She said hazardous materials will be sent out of the community by searift.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/56-oil-drums-removed-from-iqaluit-shoreline-1.3275309>

MUN, Nunatsiavut government announce research project

Published on October 21, 2015

Memorial University and the Nunatsiavut government have announced a joint \$7.4-million, five-year project, the university reports on its website.



Nunatsiavut government president Sarah Leo.

The project will merge academic research with traditional knowledge and aims to preserve and promote the Labrador Inuit culture and language.

It's funded by a \$2.3-million Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) grant, \$1.6 million from the Nunatsiavut government, \$1.38 million from Memorial University and a combined \$2.12 million from 20 other organizations

The project, Tradition and Transition Among the Labrador Inuit, is led by Tom Gordon, professor emeritus, School of Music.

More than 30 Inuit tradition-bearers and academic researchers from across Canada and the U.S. are involved. Twenty institutions and organizations will be collaborating on 49 sub-projects.

Researchers are focusing on three themes: a relationship between people and their environment; a pattern of leadership; and a legacy of expressive culture, starting with a unique language — the Labrador Inuktitut as a living language integral to Labrador Inuit cultural identity.

“What excites me most about this project is its potential to generate dialogue across traditional knowledge and scientific enquiry, between elders whose knowledge comes from lived experience and senior academics steeped in disciplined enquiry,” Gordon said in a post on MUN’s website. “This circle of conversation will expand through its engagement of Inuit youth and young academics, all of us working together to capture the

cultural knowledge of the Labrador Inuit as a foundation for a resilient and rooted future for Nunatsiavut.”

“The Nunatsiavut government has enjoyed a good working relationship with Memorial University over the years,” said Sarah Leo, president of the Nunatsiavut government. “The initiative announced today is just one of many that will result from a memorandum of understanding that was signed in February of last year, formalizing a new partnership for extensive multi-year interdisciplinary research on Labrador Inuit traditions and transition. The information gathered from this research will help the Nunatsiavut government as we continue to move forward with our goal of reviving, protecting and revitalizing Labrador Inuit culture and language.”

MUN and the Nunatsiavut government will also build a digital database consisting of the project findings. This data will be accessible to Inuit communities, the public and other academic researchers and will be housed at Memorial University’s Queen Elizabeth II (QEII) Library. Cultural knowledge revealed through this project will be also showcased at Illusuak (which means “sod hut” in Inuktitut), Nunatsiavut’s new cultural centre currently under construction in Nain.

“This is a proud day for Memorial University and our province,” said Gary Kachanoski, president and vice-chancellor, Memorial University. “This research partnership will open doors for Inuit communities in the future and serve as a stepping stone for many meaningful partnerships.”

The project’s research agenda was developed through more than 50 consultations held in each of the five communities in the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area and Upper Lake Melville. From Oct. 25-28, Gordon and the research team will be in Hopedale, Labrador, rolling out the project at the Nunatsiavut Heritage Forum, an annual gathering of community leaders and heritage workers from across Nunatsiavut.

Direct Link: <http://www.thetelegram.com/News/Local/2015-10-21/article-4317120/MUN,-Nunatsiavut-government%20nbsp%3B-announce-research-project/1>

MLA wants decision on Nunavut’s west Hudson Bay polar bear quota

NWMB recommends TAH increase from 24 to 38; GN wanted no increase

JIM BELL, October 22, 2015 - 11:00 am

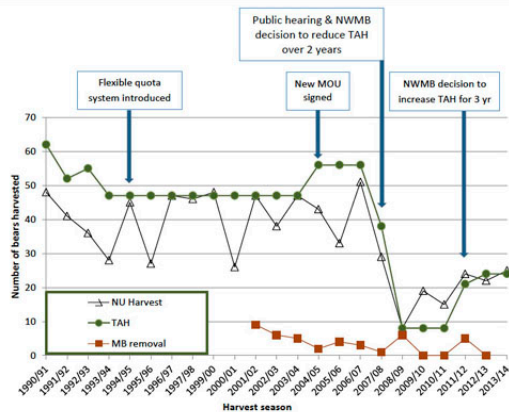


Figure 1. Changes in Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) and actual harvest of polar bears in the Western Hudson Bay.

Follow the bouncing polar bear quota. This graph shows the abrupt changes to the total allowable harvest for the western Hudson Bay polar bear sub-population that occurred after 2005. The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board now recommends a quota of 38, but the Government of Nunavut has yet to make a decision. (IMAGE EXTRACTED FROM GN SUBMISSION TO THE NWMB)



This night photo shows polar bears outside of Arviat clawing at frozen seal meat. The local wildlife office put the food outside the hamlet limits in November 2013 to keep the bears at bay as they migrate north. (PHOTO COURTESY OF ARVIAT WILDLIFE OFFICE)

Joe Savikataaq, the MLA for Arviat South, wants to know if Johnny Mike, the Nunavut environment minister, will say yes to a recommendation from the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board to raise the quota for the controversial western Hudson Bay polar bear sub-population from 24 to 38.

And Savikataaq suggested that Mike may be dragging his feet on the issue because the Government of Nunavut disagrees with the NWMB recommendation, which would make the quota 14 bears higher than what the GN wanted last year.

But Mike said he's not yet ready to give his answer.

"I'm not agreeing with it, I'm not disagreeing with it. I just want to carefully consider it," Mike said Oct. 21 in the legislative assembly, in response to questions from Savikataaq.

The NWMB's recommendations to the minister — under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement — are supposed to be confidential.

But in this case, the NWMB's recommendation isn't much of a secret. And Mike confirmed the number in response to questions from Savikataaq.

More than 10 years ago, the western Hudson Bay polar bear issue became a battleground for Inuit hunters, researchers and governments, who engaged in bitter disputes with each other about whether climate change was threatening to reduce the region's polar bear population.

And Inuit in the region — where [communities like Arviat are overrun](#) with migrating polar bears — accused some researchers of ignoring Inuit traditional knowledge.

The dispute also pitted the Canadian Wildlife Service against the GN, who each produced competing studies.

Much of that bickering has settled down, especially after the Canadian Wildlife Service, an agency of Environment Canada, began accepting the validity of Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit.

But Kivalliq region hunters in Arviat, Whale Cove, Rankin Inlet, Chesterfield Inlet and Baker Lake have waited a long time for a decision on the region's polar bear quota.

[The NWMB held a public hearing](#) on the issue nearly a year ago, on Dec. 2 and Dec. 3 in Rankin Inlet.

At that meeting, the GN said the total allowable harvest should remain at 24 until the NWMB can review that number by the 2017-18 hunting season.

That's up from a quota of only eight bears that Kivalliq hunters were stuck with between 2007-08 and 2010-11.

But Kivalliq hunters want more, and the NWMB appears to agree with them.

Its new proposed quota of 38 would not, however, restore the total allowable harvest to where the quota stood in 2005, when the GN raised it to 56 from 47, a position from which the territorial government backtracked rapidly in 2007.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674mla_wants_decision_on_nunavuts_west_hudson_bay_polar_bear_quota/

Elizabeth May to push Trudeau for Indigenous representation at Paris climate change talks



Brandi Morin

APTN National News

On the heels of Canada's election Monday Green Party leader Elizabeth May is travelling to Ottawa Wednesday to request a meeting with Prime Minister-designate Justin Trudeau to discuss climate change.

Specifically, the upcoming United Nations COP21 gathering in Paris at the end of November.

"We've gone through 10 years of an ongoing nightmare for those who understand climate ... Stephen Harper's stance on climate change has slowed down the world, hurt global negotiations, and thank God it's over now, but we have a lot of work to do to make sure Justin Trudeau is prepared for what's ahead," said May in an interview with APTN National News before boarding a plane from Vancouver to Ottawa.

And if Canada is going to be prepared for the talks they should have Indigenous representation on its official delegation, she said.

"If you go to international negotiations, and you go as Canada, how could you not have First Nations, Metis and Inuit leadership on the delegation?" said May. "You just couldn't."

Canada will still have Indigenous people attending the Paris talks, including Eriel Deranger of Athabasca Fort Chipewyan First Nation (ACFN) who is accredited to take part in the conference through the United Nations.

"We are in an urgent situation and have been for many, many years," said Deranger, an advocate for the environment and communications coordinator with ACFN.

“The very places, species and eco systems that are threatened by climate change from resource and destructive industries that are contributing to greenhouse gas emissions, are the very places we have been fighting to protect since colonization.”

Deranger’s First Nation, in northern Alberta, is located upstream from the tar sands. She said the community has struggled to find balance between economic participation with industrial development while bearing the brunt of the environmental effects of the latter like pollution, contamination of the water, lands and wildlife.

Deranger refers to herself as an Indigenous rights land defender and believes climate change is the number one threat to Indigenous rights worldwide.

“Our cultural identity is no longer under threat from the colonial ideologies that tried to undermine us but climate change is the new threat,” she said.

May agrees that climate change is a violation of Indigenous rights and wants Indigenous voices to be heard.

“I completely agree. And the planetary threat that exceeds any threat to human survival on the planet- basically it’s (climate change) is the most significant threat the we face other than nuclear war and we are totally running out of time... the Paris negotiations are our last chance,” said May.

Online petitions calling for May to be appointed Canada’s new environment minister started circulating Tuesday and were gaining thousands of signatures by Wednesday.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/10/21/elizabeth-may-to-push-trudeau-for-indigenous-representation-at-paris-climate-change-talks/>

Land Claims & Treaty Rights

Vaughn Palmer: Disputes still slow First Nations treaty process

Three decades on: Overlapping claims, lack of a chief commissioner among obvious obstacles

By Vaughn Palmer, Vancouver Sun October 15, 2015



File: Marchers walk from Creeland Mini mart to the Saskatchewan Legislature to protest first nation and treaty rights during the Saskatchewan First Nations day of action in Regina September 23, 2011.

VICTORIA — As the First Nations treaty process slogs through its third decade in B.C., one of the continuing obstacles to progress is a challenge that the natives were expected to sort out without further assistance from the province or the federal government.

“First Nations should resolve issues related to overlapping traditional territories among themselves,” was one of the dozen-and-a-half recommendations from the task force that launched the treaty process at the outset of the 1990s.

But it hasn’t worked out that way, as the B.C. Treaty Commission says in its annual progress report, released last week.

“Resolving overlapping claims and shared territory issues has proven to be much more challenging than any of the parties anticipated,” says the overseer commission. “All parties to treaty negotiations feel the impact of outstanding disputes, (which) disrupt negotiations, slow implementation of treaties and reconciliation generally.”

Far from being a side issue to settling treaties, overlaps are a fundamental aspect of relations between neighbouring First Nations, involving as they do not just conflicting claims to land and resources, but to the exercise of hunting, fishing, trapping and other constitutionally-protected aboriginal rights.

“Overlapping and shared territory issues are about families and relations,” says the commission, “and overlap resolutions can play a role in governance and nationhood by strengthening bonds between First Nations.”

But in the absence of such resolutions, the assertion of overlapping claims can hobble any other kind progress at the treaty table: “This makes it difficult to give the resolution of overlaps priority, given the demands on the First Nation’s negotiating team and its resources.”

Another challenge is establishing who speaks for a given First Nation, and who is the actual holder of title to a traditional territory: “Hereditary house structures add another layer of complexity to some of the larger First Nations in the treaty negotiations process.”

Several current disputes over access to land and resources — including two in the liquefied natural gas sector — involve disputes within recognized First Nations over who is the rightful holder of aboriginal rights and title.

Though this is not the first time that the commission has drawn attention to the problem of overlapping claims, the concern has been brought to the forefront because of the recent decision of the Supreme Court of Canada on aboriginal title.

The high court, in recognizing title for the first time in a case involving the Tsilhqot'in people, laid down a series of tests that a First Nation must meet to establish title — namely substantial, continuous and exclusive occupancy of the claimed territory.

“While the historical presence of various First Nations on lands subject to a title claim will not eliminate the possibility of title being proven, the assertion of competing claims to exclusive occupation of title lands poses significant challenges,” says the commission, quoting a recent legal opinion on the implications of the high court decision.

With the courts obliging First Nations to prove continuous and exclusive occupation of their territories, the commission expects overlapping claims to loom larger than ever in treaty negotiations.

But how to resolve them? The commission hasn't given up on view that the prime obligation is on native people themselves: “First Nations are best placed to resolve overlapping and shared territory issues, but all parties have an interest in supporting First Nations in finding solutions to overlap issues.”

The commission then cites examples where with the right application of effort and resources, some overlaps have been resolved. It also notes a more comprehensive possibility that emerged from a conference put on by the commission earlier this year:

“The creation of a panel of experts — possibly the former Chief Commissioners themselves — that would make recommendations on the overlapping disputes that have not reached resolution, and would consider whether or not sufficient efforts have been made by the parties to resolve their disputes so that negotiations can move forward.”

Nor are overlaps the only obstacles to progress identified in the report. Other pressing needs include relief from the lingering debts (\$500 million and counting) taken on by First Nations in order to finance their side of negotiations, and a call for a fresh bargaining mandate from the federal government.

One might even be forthcoming, particularly if there's a change of government next week. Which is not to say that the provincial government has clean hands in this matter.

The B.C. Liberals showed profound disrespect for the process when they recruited widely-respected former cabinet minister George Abbott to serve as chief commissioner, then dumped him just as he was about to take up his duties last April.

Months later, the post remains vacant, with First Nations representative Celeste Haldane occupying it on an acting basis. On the release of the annual report last week, the federal representative on the commission, Jerry Lampert, took a shot at the B.C. Liberals for dragging their feet.

“We’re very troubled by the fact that we have not seen progress in appointing a chief commissioner,” he told The Canadian Press. “I don’t understand B.C.’s rationale for not wanting to appoint a chief commissioner, because the [treaty] process is going to continue.”

It ought to, for in light of the high court decision on title, there’s a greater need than ever to resolve aboriginal title. But unless all parties recommit, the process may not continue in any useful way.

Read more:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/news/vaughn+palmer+disputes+still+slow+first+nations+treaty+process/11441551/story.html#ixzz3p9GnWMoy>

Uncertainty on rights

by Contributed | Story: 150045 - Oct 19, 2015 / 12:54 pm



By Malcolm Lavoie and Dwight Newman

The past year has seen a lot of Canadians paying attention to aboriginal land rights.

From opposition by aboriginal groups to proposed pipeline developments in their traditional territories, to a recent declaration of aboriginal title in British Columbia, to ongoing disputes over modern treaty implementation, aboriginal land rights have come to occupy an increasingly prominent place in public policy discussion in this country.

When the issue of legal uncertainty relating to aboriginal land rights is raised, the solution most often proposed is for governments to engage in negotiations with aboriginal groups aimed at comprehensive land claims settlements.

Yet a recent report we authored for the Fraser Institute, focusing on modern land claims agreements in Yukon, indicates that the certainty dividend from such agreements can prove illusory, particularly if courts do not prioritize legal certainty in their decision-making.

Yukon's successful negotiation by the early 1990s of agreements aimed at resolving land claims disputes with First Nations initially seemed to provide tremendous legal certainty on aboriginal rights questions. And the territory proudly touted its negotiated agreements as an advantage in attracting investment to its natural resource sector.

Until relatively recently, the Fraser Institute's annual surveys of mining industry executives indicated that aboriginal land claims were not perceived as generating significant investment uncertainty in Yukon.

Indeed, Yukon fared well relative to other jurisdictions.

However, there has been a dramatic shift in perceptions since 2012, with far fewer mining executives surveyed indicating that Yukon offers legal certainty with respect to aboriginal land claims. Indeed, an increasing number cite this uncertainty as discouraging investment.

Our study argues that the increased perception of legal uncertainty can be linked directly to case law developments.

Supreme Court of Canada decisions on the duty to consult aboriginal peoples and the interpretation of modern treaties have begun to suggest that so-called comprehensive land claims agreements may not be so comprehensive after all. Courts have shown a willingness to reinterpret and go beyond the terms of what are highly detailed agreements, in order to impose additional, unforeseen consultation obligations on governments.

They have also extended consultation obligations to new types of government decision-making, in one case effectively overturning the legislative framework that had long governed mining in Yukon. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that potential investors have taken notice and have shown a greater reluctance to invest in a territory that now seems to offer far less legal certainty than it once appeared.

The situation in Yukon offers lessons that extend well beyond the borders of that territory. If court decisions undermine the certainty dividend that is supposed to attach to modern land claims agreements, then the incentives for governments and aboriginal groups to enter into such agreements will be diminished.

This imperils the objective of lasting reconciliation between aboriginal and non-aboriginal Canadians. In addition, by perpetuating conditions of legal uncertainty, courts can make Canadian jurisdictions less attractive in the global competition for investment in natural resources. This undermines options for economic development and prosperity for aboriginal and non-aboriginal Canadians alike.

As our study emphasizes, however, it is possible to provide robust protections for aboriginal rights without creating conditions of legal uncertainty.

First, courts should not impose obligations that go beyond the express terms of modern land claims agreements, unless genuine gaps in the agreement are found.

Second, courts can develop doctrines like the duty to consult in ways that provide better guidance to governments and other parties, such as resource companies. Crucially, doing so will require courts to engage in the gradual, case-by-case elaboration of standards, rather than engaging in ad hoc policy-making or further dramatic shifts in jurisprudence.

The Supreme Court of Canada, a long way from Yukon in every respect, will nonetheless make major legal determinations that affect the future of the territory. We should all encourage it to get things right, and be ready to speak out when it does not. Legal certainty matters that much.

Malcolm Lavoie is visiting assistant professor at the University of Alberta Faculty of Law, and Dwight Newman is professor of law and Canada Research Chair in indigenous rights at the University of Saskatchewan. They have published a co-authored study with the Fraser Institute.

Direct Link: <http://www.castanet.net/news/Commentary/150045/Uncertainty-on-rights>

Treaty 8 chiefs talk consultation, land rights with Notley

By [Vincent McDermott](#)

Wednesday, October 21, 2015 4:51:25 MDT PM



Treaty 8 Grand Chief Steve Courtoreille presents Alberta Premier Rachel Notley with a gift following a meeting between the Premier and Treaty 8 First Nations, at the Alberta Legislature, in Edmonton Alta. on Tuesday Oct. 20, 2015. David Bloom/Edmonton Sun/Postmedia Network

First Nation chiefs from Treaty 8 territory, which covers much of Alberta's oilsands, are hoping a meeting with Premier Rachel Notley will lead to improved social conditions and government relationships with aboriginal communities.

During a Tuesday meeting with the chiefs in Edmonton, a major talking point during meetings was the implementation of the UN declaration into provincial law, which Notley campaigned on prior to last spring's provincial election.

Also discussed was the NDP's plan to repeal the Aboriginal Consultation Levy Act, which allows the province to regulate consultation with industry over development on Crown and aboriginal land.

"She heard loud and clear from the chiefs how we want to move forward with the province and how we're going to deal with the UN declaration," said Steve Courtoreille, Grand Chief of Treaty 8 First Nations.

Compared to previous governments, Courtoreille - who is also chief of the Mikisew Cree First Nation in Fort Chipewyan - said the chiefs felt much more confident that First Nation concerns would not only be considered, but lead to a greater role in resource development.

"If the province wants to find a way to put us in the driver's seat and find a way to work closer together, that's a win-win situation for everybody and the economy, especially right now," he said. "The talks looking good right now. There seems to be a willingness on the part of the province, which I haven't seen for quite some time."

In a statement, Notley said the meeting focused on renewing the provincial government's relationship with First Nations.

"Through collaboration and greater dialogue, we can move towards a more open and meaningful relationship for the benefit of all Alberta families," a statement quoted her as saying.

The same statement quoted Aboriginal Relations Minister Kathleen Ganley as praising the importance of the UN declaration, and that the meeting provided the province with valuable feedback about their plans.

“The UN Declaration is a far-reaching document that will redefine this province’s relationship with Indigenous peoples,” she said.

The chiefs raised other social and economic issues they had, such as the pace of industrial development and environmental consultation, the quality of education and health care issues in aboriginal communities, child and family services, and missing and murdered aboriginal women.

The future of the Cumulative Environmental Management Association, a multi-stakeholder policy group with aboriginal members, was not discussed.

“We will need more than a few meet-and-greets to talk about everything,” said Courtoreille.

Direct Link: <http://www.fortmcmurraytoday.com/2015/10/21/consultation-aboriginal-issues-discussed-during-treaty-8-meeting>

Special Topic: Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women

Christie Blatchford: An example for why there should be no inquiry into missing, murdered aboriginal women

[Christie Blatchford](#) | October 15, 2015 7:48 PM ET



The families of deceased aboriginal youths enter the courtroom for the first day of the inquest in Thunder Bay.

If ever you wondered why there should not be a public inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women, I give you its mini-me, the Ontario coroner's inquest into the deaths of seven aboriginal young people.

The inquest is ongoing — in its fashion — before Dr. David Eden and a five-member jury in Thunder Bay, Ont.

The qualifier about its ongoing-ness arises from the fact that after a gruelling four days last week, punctuated by break after break, the inquest sat for a day and a half this week before promptly adjourning Wednesday.

It is not sitting at all next week, this as per the agreed-upon regular schedule, which has it working Monday to Thursday for two weeks, then off for a week, etc., because so many of the players have to travel to get there. The inquest is slated to go into the spring. I predict it will last longer.

I covered the first four-day week, and can report that it was replete with the usual self-congratulatory flatulence, many of the lawyers regularly thanking the witnesses for their courage and Dr. Eden effusively thanking the lawyers for their professionalism.

On one of those days, I looked about the courtroom and realized to my horror that I was perhaps the only person in the room who was not actively latched on one way or another to the public teat.

(There are another couple of reporters sometimes, and regular folks observing, and one lawyer representing the Thunder Bay Police Association, a party with standing, whose fees would be paid by members' dues.)

There are three provincial prosecutors, all paid by the Ontario government, and nine other parties with standing, each of which is represented by at least one lawyer and sometimes two.



Sandi Krasowski for National Post Families of seven deceased First Nation youths are crammed around the outer walls inside the tiny court room during the inquest in Thunder Bay, Ont., on Oct. 5, 2015.

On this particular day, I counted 12 or 13 lawyers in the room.

The other parties with standing — it means they have a direct interest in the inquest and could conceivably be the subject of recommendations — are six of the seven families of the dead young people, who are represented by Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto; the Northern Nishnawbe Education Council, a local school board that takes in the Thunder Bay high school where six of the young people were enrolled at the time of their deaths; the Thunder Bay Police Service, board and chief, all represented by the same Toronto firm; the City of Thunder Bay; the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth; Nishnawbe Aski Nation or NAN, the political organization that encompasses the late kids' home reserves in remote Northern Ontario; the Ontario First Nations Young People's Council of the Chiefs of Ontario, the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

All of those organizations either are government (the city, province and feds) or are financed primarily if not wholly by one or another level of government. It is an inference, but I think a fair one, that their legal representation at the inquest will also be publicly funded.

The presiding coroner, of course, is a salaried Ontario employee. His constable comes from the OPP.

The seven young people whose deaths are being examined came to Thunder Bay from their remote, often fly-in, reserves to go to high school.

For the inquest, that means a couple of things.

It means that since their families come from the same places, they likely couldn't attend the proceedings. Thus, a couple of years ago when this thing was in the planning, the Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services transferred \$250,000 to NAN to assist the families to attend.

The coroner's office, meantime, says Ontario Chief Coroner Dirk Hoyer is picking up the cost of the webcast, whatever that turns out to be — the inquest already has been moved once, from a small and unsuitable room it was assigned by local judges to a proper one, and it could happen again.

Hoyer said Thursday in a phone interview that the numbers signing on to watch the webcast have ranged from 150 to 50 a day.

The coroner's office (it's a branch of the same ministry) is responsible for paying the five jurors a small daily fee but also for picking up their travel costs.

Usually, that's not prohibitive, because jurors usually live in the area where they serve.

But this is the first coroner's jury in the province to have benefited from the volunteer jury initiative, as it was called, which was designed to increase First Nations representation on Ontario juries.

NAN, through Deputy Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler and NAN lawyer Julian Falconer, played a key role in the project and toured some of the remote northern reserves — and actually ended up with more than 350 volunteers.

This is the first inquest in Ontario to proceed using that list as part of the pool, randomly chosen, and with one of the five from the new list, travel and expenses will obviously be higher than usual.

Some of this is clearly good news — more representative juries, more First Nation participation — but, in the end, what the inquest will accomplish is dubious.

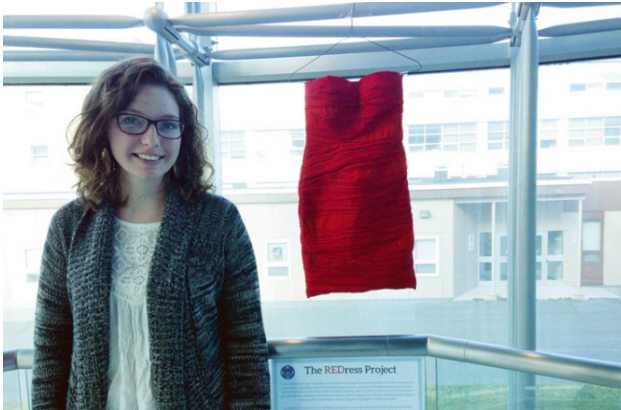
The attention paid to the underlying issues — the residential school hangover, which has so decimated Aboriginal families, the dysfunction and despair on some of these reserves — can't, I suppose, be a bad thing, though I suspect most Canadians know all this already.

But the recommendations of coroner's juries are just that. Governments and public institutions can act on them, or not, and mostly, they don't. And if nothing changes, and almost always nothing changes, then it will have been a painful and expensive exercise, period, just as an inquiry into the missing and murdered aboriginal women likely would be.

Direct Link: <http://news.nationalpost.com/full-comment/christie-blatchford-an-example-for-why-there-should-be-no-inquiry-into-missing-murdered-aboriginal-women>

Red dresses hung at MUN to represent missing and murdered Aboriginal women

By **Claire Davis** -
October 19, 2015



It's hard to ignore a red dress hanging from the ceiling

You might have seen several red dresses hanging around Memorial University in the past few weeks.

Those dresses are meant to represent the Aboriginal women who have been reported missing or murdered in Newfoundland and Labrador in the last three decades.

It's part of an initiative called the REDress project, which was started by Manitoba woman Jaime Black as a way to bring attention to the number of murdered and missing Aboriginal women in Canada.

"It's a visually striking way to engage people," said Lindsay Batt, MUNSU's Aboriginal Student Rep.

"It's not just a poster on a wall, it's a hanging dress that represents a woman or girl who is no longer with us."

Since Black began the project, some cities across Canada have adapted it. Most recently, Memorial University's student union has taken it on, as both a tribute and a call to action.

"Those are just the numbers reported...the real number is probably higher," said Batt.

"A lot of people don't know how severe this issue is. It's at epidemic levels."

There were 23 Aboriginal women reported missing or murdered in this province over the past 30 years.

Batt points out that some communities in Newfoundland only consist of 23 people.

Certain tragedies that have captivated mass media over the past 30 years have had fewer than 23 victims, she said, and yet murdered and missing Aboriginal women have not historically received widespread attention.

The REDress project aims to re-focus that attention.

The installation was up for the Sisters in Spirit vigil on October 4, which is an annual, nation-wide event where community members come together to pay tribute to the 1,200 Aboriginal women across Canada reported missing or murdered in the past 30 years.

Batt says that she hopes the project incentivizes people to demand more of a response from all levels of government.

“I would love for leaders or candidates to just take a stand on the issue,” she said. “So far it’s been pretty silent.”

Direct Link: <http://themuse.ca/2015/10/19/red-dresses-hung-at-mun-to-represent-missing-and-murdered-aboriginal-women/>

Missing and murdered Aboriginal women remembered at Hamilton police station



Hamilton Police Chief Glenn DeCaire, left, takes part in a remembrance service for Canada's missing and murdered Aboriginal women at the Hamilton Mountain Police Station on Rymal Road Wednesday morning. Fire keeper Tom Reape, Elder, Walter Cooke, Fred Loft, and Allan Loft keep a ceremonial fire burning in memory of all missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Hamilton Spectator , Oct 21, 2015

By [Carmela Fragomeni](#)

There was optimism at a Mountain ceremony honouring missing and murdered Aboriginal women that prime minister-elect Justin Trudeau will hold an inquiry or somehow address this national tragedy.

About 1,000 names of those missing and murdered across Canada were read out in a "roll call" divided among those at the commemoration in front of the Mountain police station Wednesday.

The event was held beside a flourishing white pine tree planted 10 years ago in the women's memory.

"Ten years have passed. We wanted to bring back that memory and respect, in honour of them," said Valerie Williams, of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee, which represents Aboriginals and police services including Hamilton's, the RCMP and the OPP.

"I feel very confident about the Liberals and prime minister Justin Trudeau," said Williams after the ceremony. "I feel he'll truly go forward and look at it more seriously. I think a lot of Aboriginal women have that hope, too."

Hamilton Police Chief Glenn De Caire called the ceremony "very significant" for having the community come together to pause, reflect and stand together.

"This tree has so much more growth to come. It is representative of so much more work to come (on this issue)," he said.

On a possible inquiry, De Caire said "we will watch any direction of our new government. We will participate and continue to act locally. ... I have yet to see what will be laid out on the inquiry."

About 75 people — roughly 20 of them police officers — gathered for the ceremony.

Among them were two Muslim women wearing hijabs — head scarves covering their hair. The two, who work in the Intercultural Dialogue Institute's Hamilton branch, were invited to attend by the organizers.

"We believe in peace, dialogue, living together and respecting each other's culture," said the branch's outreach co-ordinator Esma Adas, about why they attended.

Aboriginal elder Allan Loft, with the Healthy Aboriginal Men's Group, said the gathering was to remember all murdered and missing women and their families — not just the murdered women "from our own people."

OPP Const. Monty Kohoko noted the tree has flourished in the 10 years since it was planted, but in that time frame "we continued to lose women."

"Our resolve to remember them remains strong," he said. "We continue to endure and remember. They (the women) would want us to remember. But most important, they want us to heal."

Deputy Chief Eric Girt told the gathering one of the most stressful situations police deal with are missing people.

"It's a serious call. But we need the community's help," he said.

Direct Link: <http://www.thespec.com/news-story/5971736-missing-and-murdered-aboriginal-women-remembered-at-hamilton-police-station/>

Quebec to look at violence faced by aboriginal women

Hearings could start before Christmas

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 21, 2015 9:41 PM ET Last Updated: Oct 21, 2015 9:41 PM ET



27 year-old Sylvie is an abuse survivor from Côte-Nord. (Radio-Canada)

A legislative committee is poised to look into higher than average rates of domestic and sexual violence faced by aboriginal women in Quebec, an idea in the works for two years and an issue close to Premier Philippe Couillard's heart.

"Breaking the silence is difficult," says Pénélope Guay, co-founder of Messinak House, an aboriginal women's shelter. She welcomes the committee hearings and believes men also need to be included in hearings because "they are also part of the solution. They need to speak."

Committee hearings, similar to the ones that took place around end-of-life care, could start before the Christmas holiday. The idea is seen by some MNAs and advocates as a starting point to finding solutions. Statistics show 80 per cent of aboriginal women experience domestic violence.

'Not the only one'

"He fractured my jaw. I took myself to the hospital," says 27-year-old Sylvie of her ex-partner. CBC agreed to withhold her real name in order to protect her identity.



Pénélope Guay, co-founder of the Missinak aboriginal women's shelter, welcomes the committee hearings. (Radio-Canada)

"When I gave birth, it wasn't with a happy face. I had a bruise on my cheek because he beat me the night before." Her life has been marked by violence — she suffered from both domestic and child abuse.

Sylvie found help, but it is hundreds of kilometres away from her Côte-Nord community. Survivors say help is hard to find. In their communities, everyone knows everyone, and beyond that, some women say police there don't do much.

"Why do I have to leave? Why is it me who has to suffer and leave my children while he walks around freely in our community?" asks Marie, a 52-year-old Innu woman, also from the Côte-Nord. She left her home after her partner tried to attack her with a saw. "I'm not the only one," she says.

Prime minister-designate Justin Trudeau has promised an investigation into another problem facing aboriginal women. During the election, Trudeau committed to an inquiry into murdered and missing aboriginal women, an idea repeatedly rejected by the Harper government.

With files from Martine Biron.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-to-look-at-violence-faced-by-aboriginal-women-1.3282636>

Quebec police accused of raping aboriginal women

2015-10-23 11:05



Montreal - Fourteen criminal investigations were launched Thursday into alleged rapes of aboriginal women by uniformed Quebec policemen in their patrol cars, including several victims who have since been reported missing.

The women said they were beaten, handcuffed and raped, and later dumped on the side of logging roads far from home in the frigid cold, their cellphones busted.

Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard announced the provincial police probes after accusations were made by several women in the media. It will be up to prosecutors whether to lay charges after reviewing the cases.

Public broadcaster Radio-Canada said eight officers in the remote Val d'Or region, about 500km north of Montreal, were the target of the investigations.

"It's unacceptable to use your position or powers to sexually assault women, particularly vulnerable women," said Quebec Public Safety Minister Lise Theriault. She also announced a review of the province's rape laws.

The accusations come days after Justin Trudeau's Liberals defeated the Tories in legislative elections. Trudeau has promised to hold a national inquiry into more than 1 000 murdered or missing aboriginal women.

Outgoing Prime Minister Stephen Harper long resisted calls for an inquiry, seeing the disproportionate number of deaths and disappearances as resulting from domestic violence.

He has said these tragedies are not due to a sociological phenomenon but rather are crimes that should be investigated by police.

Native leaders and activists have been calling for an inquiry for more than a decade, since dozens of prostitutes went missing in Vancouver's seedy Downtown Eastside and were later determined to have been victims of a serial killer.

A 2014 report by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police identified 1 181 murdered or missing aboriginal women dating back to 1952. Of these, 120 homicides and 105 missing cases remained unsolved.

In most cases, the perpetrators were known to the victims.

Direct Link: <http://www.news24.com/World/News/Quebec-police-accused-of-raping-aboriginal-women-20151022>

Yukon government, First Nations to hold MMIW roundtable

'We are working together for a cause that should never have happened.'

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 21, 2015 5:25 PM CT Last Updated: Oct 21, 2015 5:25 PM CT



'The families deserve answers,' said Kwanlin Dün chief Doris Bill at Wednesday's announcement. (CBC)

The Yukon government, First Nations and other community groups are planning a couple of events this winter, to ensure missing and murdered indigenous women are not forgotten, and to search for solutions.

Government and First Nations representatives announced Wednesday they'll host a family gathering in December, for relatives of the missing to come together, share stories, and talk about what help they would have liked when their loved ones went missing or were murdered. Then, in February, a regional roundtable will look for new ways to address the issue.

"We are working together for a cause that should never have happened," said Doris Anderson, president of the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council.

"We are at a place in time that we can show our future generations that, as leaders, we stood together, worked together to find justice."

Elaine Taylor, Yukon's minister responsible for the Women's Directorate, said in a statement that "the statistics are shocking." She said in Yukon alone, there are 39 missing or murdered indigenous women and girls.



'There is strength here today, as we move forward together,' said Doris Anderson, president Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council. (CBC)

Wednesday's announcement stems from a similar national roundtable [held earlier this year in Ottawa](#). A Yukon delegation, led by Premier Darrell Pasloski, attended and afterwards recommended a similar event in Yukon.

"The families deserve answers, they deserve concrete solutions and preventable measures, so we are all able to make a difference in the future," Kwanlin Dün chief Doris Bill said Wednesday.

"Family members need to know that we care, that somebody is listening," Bill said.

The roundtable is being billed as an opportunity for government and other Yukon organizations to talk about and collaborate on different initiatives addressing safety for indigenous women, and support for victims' families.

Bill said it's a good step, but provinces, territories and communities can only do so much on their own. She says the federal government must also be involved.

"I am encouraged by what I'm hearing from our Prime minister-designate," Bill said. "One can only be optimistic that some answers and solutions may now be forthcoming."

Justin Trudeau has said his government will get moving on a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women "very quickly."

"I believe there is a need for a national public inquiry to bring justice for the victims, healing for the families and to put an end to this tragedy," Trudeau said Tuesday afternoon.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/yukon-government-first-nations-to-hold-mmiw-roundtable-1.3282815>

Special Topic: Residential Schools, Truth & Reconciliation, and '60s Scoop

City of Saskatoon to respond to Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls to action

City says many recommendations are 'actionable' by cities

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 15, 2015 3:40 PM CT Last Updated: Oct 15, 2015 3:40 PM CT



The city of Saskatoon will outline its plan to deal with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action at executive committee on Monday. (CBC)

The city of Saskatoon will outline its response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's [calls to actions](#) next Monday.

"Several of the TRC Calls to Action are immediately actionable by the city to improve upon our current relationships with our Aboriginal residents," Gilles Dorval, director of Aboriginal Relations, said in a release.

"We've also identified ongoing efforts that will help us to move towards achieving full reconciliation through embedded best practices for Aboriginal inclusion in how we provide services."

Right now, the city said it has already done or is currently doing the following:

- Offering aboriginal cultural awareness training to all city employees and mandatory training for Saskatoon Police Service employees.

- Offered a "Profile Saskatoon Grant" of \$150,000 and organizing support for the 2016 World Indigenous Business Forum and International Indigenous Music and Cultural Festival.
- Created a partnership with Saskatoon Tribal Council, Gabriel Dumont Institute and other organizations on the delivery of the Urban Aboriginal Leadership Program to build capacity among aboriginal people that leads to employment.

"The City is working closely with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner and other partners to develop a holistic action plan for reconciliation and increased Aboriginal inclusion," Dorval said.

He said the city will consider the following next steps: identifying opportunities for social enterprises and reviewing city policies and programs with an aboriginal lens.

It will also aim to connect aboriginal people with employment and economic opportunities through the Saskatoon Aboriginal Employment and Economic Partnership.

As well, the release said the city will hold events to educate aboriginal development businesses or organizations on city rules and steps for land and procurements opportunities.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/city-of-saskatoon-to-respond-to-truth-and-reconciliation-commission-calls-to-action-1.3273289>

Special Topic: International Indigenous Populations

Quail Run students get beyond the book with Native American history



Quail Run second-grader Ryan Toomay is the first of her classmates to head inside a teepee outside the school on Thursday, Oct. 15, 2015. The teepee was lent to fifth-grade teacher Brenda Meyers, who is teaching her social studies class about Native American history and cultures. The fifth-graders visited the

tepee with their second-grade buddies, who have recently done a unit on the Native Americans of the plains region.

By [Rochelle Valverde](#)

October 15, 2015

After six weeks of studying Native American history, Quail Run students take turns ducking inside a 15-foot tepee Thursday afternoon. The fifth-grade students have spent weeks researching different North American tribes and soon will make their own, much smaller versions of traditional dwellings — hogans, longhouses, wickiups — as part of model villages.

The villages, which are the final project of the six-week unit, will include elements representing the traditional clothing, food and culture of tribes from different regions in North America, explained fifth-grade teacher Brenda Meyers. Meyers said the students will make every part of the models by hand, and that the project helps the unit go beyond the dates and facts to the wider story.

“It helps put it on their level,” she said. “It shows how we are alike and different.”

Quail Run second-grader Ryan Toomay is the first of her classmates to head inside a tepee outside the school on Thursday, Oct. 15, 2015. The tepee was lent to fifth-grade teacher Brenda Meyers, who is teaching her social studies class about Native American history and cultures. The fifth-graders visited the tepee with their second-grade buddies, who have recently done a unit on the Native Americans of the plains region.

Another way connections are made between the students and the material is through the integrated library program, which is used in elementary schools throughout the Lawrence school district. As part of the accompanying library unit, the students learned about how Native Americans were forced to attend boarding schools and that Haskell Institute — now Haskell Indian Nations University — once served as one such school. The local element, along with reading a story about a Native American boy sent to boarding school, makes the topic more relatable, said Quail Run librarian Jenny Gorup.

“It’s really important for the kids because they see the local connection,” she said. “It’s good for them to see how things have changed in our own experience.”

Fifth-grader Eliza Shorter, who is part Cherokee and whose brother attends Haskell, said hearing about the boarding schools and how cultures were lost was the most interesting part of the unit. Researching the different Native American cultures was also important for her personally, she added.

“It kind of got me to know my mom better, and where I came from,” she said.

While the unit concludes next week when the students construct their model villages, as the school year goes on they will refer back to the lessons learned as the students study colonialism and westward expansion, Meyers said.

"It's how we got to where we are today and who played a part in that, so kids know how things were shaped," Meyers said.

Direct Link: <http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2015/oct/15/quail-run-students-get-beyond-book-native-american/>

'Controlled Contact' Illegal and Dangerous Say Indigenous Leaders

[Rick Kearns](#)

10/16/15

Indigenous people from Latin America are warning that the idea of controlled contact with un-contacted people is illegal and dangerous; they've written an open letter of protest to the two U.S. anthropologists who advocated the idea in an editorial in *Science* magazine earlier this year.

"We the undersigned organizations wholeheartedly reject the proposal of U.S. anthropologists Robert Walker and Kim Hill to forcibly contact uncontacted tribes. The proposal is both dangerous and illegal, and undermines the rights that Indigenous Peoples have fought long and hard for," read the letter signed by 10 indigenous organizations from Brazil, Paraguay and Peru, and supported by Survival International (SI) an advocacy group supporting tribal peoples.

In the anthropologists' editorial, published in June, Walker and Hill argued that "a well-designed contact can be quite safe" in comparison to the many disastrous interactions that have been occurring in this hemisphere for several centuries. The anthropologists asserted that with the trained and culturally competent personnel, the contacts could be "humane and ethical."

The indigenous leaders disagree. "The anthropologists claim that uncontacted tribes are unviable, but this dangerous myth plays into the hands of those who wish to invade and exploit tribal people's ancestral homelands. The real threats against uncontacted tribes' futures are genocidal violence, the invasion of their lands and theft of their natural resources, and prevailing racist attitudes," the wrote.

For SI, one of the glaring problems with the anthropologists plan involves their assertion about the "success" story of the Northern Ache people of Paraguay. The anthropologists did not mention that by the time of the cited interaction with the Ache, over 38 percent of

their people had died “as a result of first contact.” The Ache are now suing the government of Paraguay for this genocide.

One of the indigenous leaders who has joined the criticism of the anthropologists plan is the internationally known [Davi Kopenawa](#), Yanomami shaman and President of the Hutukara Yanomami Association.

“The place where the uncontacted Indians live, fish, hunt and plant must be protected. The whole world must know that they are there in their forest and that the authorities must respect their right to live there” Kopenawa said. The [Yanomami](#) have been advocating for the removal of gold miners on their lands in Brazil.

One of the other reasons why the pro-contact plan has drawn international attention is due to Peru’s announcement this year of their intention to attempt a controlled contact with the Mashco-Piro people. This effort was also met with strong opposition from indigenous and allied peoples.

As of press time, neither editors at *Science* nor Anthropologists Walker and Hill have responded to the open letter.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/10/16/controlled-contact-illegal-and-dangerous-say-indigenous-leaders-162107>

Indigenous Peoples Day in Buffalo Encouraged

Indigenous Peoples Day

11:41 p.m. EDT October 15, 2015



NEWSTEAD, NY - Newstead Councilman Justin Rooney recently sent a letter to Buffalo Common Council members encouraging them to consider recognizing Indigenous Peoples Day.

The letter points to how channels of communication opened up between the Tonawanda Senecas and the Newstead community after the town became one of the first in the state to recognize Indigenous Peoples Day.

Rooney will also be pushing for statewide change, taking his message to Albany in January, when he will no longer sit on the town board.

Recently Alaska became the first state to officially rename Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day.

Native American activists say the federal holiday honoring Christopher Columbus overlooks a painful history of colonialism and enslavement following the explorer's arrival in the New World. In many cities, Columbus Day is a celebration of Italian-American heritage. Columbus was born in Italy, but his voyage here was sponsored by King Ferdinand of Spain.

The president for the Italian American Societies of Western New York, Peter LoJacono, says the organization plans to release a statement in the next couple of weeks regarding the matter. LoJacono says they will continue to celebrate their heritage.

Direct Link: <http://www.wgrz.com/story/life/2015/10/15/wgrz-indigenous-peoples-day-buffalo/74031672/>

Native American groups to protest Kansas City Chiefs nickname at Vikings game

By [Barry Lytton, St. Paul Pioneer Press](#) on Oct 16, 2015 at 8:57 p.m.

MINNEAPOLIS -- Members of the National Coalition Against Racism in Sports and Media and other protesters plan to rally at TCF Bank Stadium on Sunday to bring attention to what they call the derogatory nature of the Kansas City Chiefs antics and the misrepresentation of Native Americans in sports. The rally will be led by Native American women and children.

“The Kansas City Chiefs have flown under the radar,” said Norma Renville, the executive director of Women of Nations Community Advocacy Program and Shelter. “They are contributing to our cultural genocide.”

The Chiefs and Vikings play at noon Sunday at TCF Bank Stadium.

Sunday's rally will be like last year's rally that drew attention to the Washington Redskins when they were in town to play the Vikings. Protesters will march to the stadium and rally there. But unlike the Redskins protest, the rally's focus will not be on the name of the Kansas City team, but the organization and its fans' antics.

The banging of a large drum that resembles a sacred drum, chief headdresses, chants and the crowd's tomahawk chop are among NCARSM's concerns.

"They don't do this to any other race of human beings," said NCARSM co-founder Clyde Bellecourt. "We're gonna declare war — declare war — on this kind of insensitivity."

Richie Plass, a 64-year-old Native American, will be among the protesters. When Plass was asked to be his high school's Indian mascot during his senior year at Shawano High School in Wisconsin, he said he was reluctant at first. But he put on the chicken-feather headdress and the frilly suede vestments after some persuasion by school leaders.

The first two games of his tenure as mascot went well, he said. They were home games and the fans — his friends, family and peers — supported him. Then he went with the basketball team to Kaukauna, where he encountered angry fans yelling slurs and grabbing at him, he said.

In tears, he ran to the visiting team's locker room soon after being pelted by banana peels, orange peels, paper cups and spit, he said.

"They wanted a Hollywood Indian," he said. "It's always bothered me; it's always in the back of my head."

Plass, who lives in Green Bay, Wis., now curates a mobile collection of more than 200 items of Native American imagery in American popular culture. He carries what he considers to be both good and bad representations, he said.

Plass' gallery, Bittersweet Winds, has been open to the public for the past few days at the American Indian Movement Interpretive Center in Minneapolis.

Past Plass' gallery, and the smell of burning sage that came with it, in a boardroom in the AIMIC on Friday, Abel Martinez, 16, and Priestess BearStops, 19, sat with community leaders at a news conference about Sunday's rally.

"Why are they so focused on making us the mascot?" Martinez asked. "Look at us. None of us are red."

The two teenagers will be among the women and children leading the rally.

Although the two are young, they are carrying on a fight that has been waged for the past 45 years, Bellecourt said. The rally is just another battle in the ongoing war to represent Native Americans as more than mascots, he said.

Ten colleges have changed their nicknames from Native American-based titles since 1972, according to a 2013 list compiled by USA Today.

Even Plass' alma mater, the Shawano Indians, changed its name. They are now the Shawano Hawks.

The Pioneer Press is a media partner with Forum News Service.

Direct Link: <http://www.grandforksherald.com/news/politics/3862967-native-american-groups-protest-kansas-city-chiefs-nickname-vikings-game>

Native Americans talk Redskins, \$20 bill in Nashville

[Andy Humbles](#), ahumbles@tennessean.com 7:31 p.m. CDT October 16, 2015

Different viewpoints shared on issues pertinent to Native Americans



Using Indians as sports nicknames, logos and mascots and Andrew Jackson's picture on the \$20 bill are issues that have been protested by and on behalf of Native Americans.

The Washington Redskins football team has been under particular scrutiny because the NFL team's nickname has been criticized as a slang and derogatory term toward Native Americans. There has also been discussion about all Indian-related sports logos and how they represent Native Americans.

There has also been criticism of Andrew Jackson, the seventh president of the United States, being on the \$20 bill. Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act in 1830 that authorized the exchange of Indian lands within existing states for unsettled lands west of the Mississippi and led to the Trail of Tears.

We asked some attending the Native American Indian Association of Tennessee's annual pow wow Friday-Sunday at Long Hunter State Park their thoughts on both issues.



Ray Emanuel (Photo: Andy Humbles/The Tennessean)

Indian names used by sports teams

Ray Emanuel, Native American Indian Association of Tennessee director: "I think we need to put all our energy toward building a better life and future for us."

Floyd Silas, Oneida Tribe, Wisconsin: "The Kansas City Chiefs, to me that's not derogatory. But Washington Redskins, to me that's derogatory. In the sports world they are at battle, so the Braves is good. Blackhawks, what's wrong with that, it's the name of a tribe. Redskins is not the name of a tribe."

Christian Hudgens, Southern Cheyenne, Oklahoma: "We're not any kind of mascot. It's offensive really."

Richard Langdeau, Dakota Sioux: "I find it very disrespectful to my people, and it's no honor at all, but it's not a focal point to my tribe. We're focused more on getting jobs for our people and helping the younger generation steer clear of drugs and alcohol."

Ralph Brady, Cherokee: "It doesn't offend me one bit. I don't particularly like being called a redskin, but as far as being a team, it's a game, a sport."



Richard Langdeau (Photo: Andy Humbles/The Tennessean)

On Andrew Jackson

Richard Langdeau: "It's just a bad misrepresentation of America really."

Franklin Prevatte, Lumbee: "The Indian people don't like Andrew Jackson, what he did to the Indian people."

Charles Robinson, Choctaw: "Surely with history of the United States, whether it would be Dr. (Martin Luther) King or whoever, great women in native history, surely there is somebody whose face you could put on a \$20 bill that would better represent our country and even our native people or women."

Mitchell Chamberlain: "He's a person of mixed activities. From an American Indian perspective, he was very hurtful to thousands of people. I wouldn't mind if they changed, brought someone else on the \$20 myself."

Reach Andy Humbles at 615-726-5939 and on Twitter @ AndyHumbles.

INDIAN EDUCATION POW WOW & FALL FESTTIVAL

Where: Long Hunter State Park, 2910 Hobson Pike, Hermitage.

Remaining schedule:

10 a.m.-dark Saturday: Opening ceremony at 11 a.m.

10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday: Opening ceremony at 11 a.m.

Highlights: Dancing; arts and crafts; food; demonstrations; storytelling; clothing; games.

Tickets: Adults \$6; senior citizens and ages 6-12 \$3; 5-under free.

Direct Link: <http://www.tennessean.com/story/news/local/2015/10/16/native-americans-washington-redskins-andrew-jackson-nashville/74003604/>

Policy makes Plan B more accessible to American Indian women

By [FELICIA FONSECA](#)

Oct. 16, 2015 6:56 PM EDT

[24](#)



FILE - In this Oct. 19, 2012 file photo, Charon Asetoyer, executive director of the Native American.

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — The federal Indian Health Service has finalized a policy that makes emergency contraception more accessible to American Indian and Alaska Native women.

The written policy released this week requires the morning-after pill to be available to women of any age over the counter at IHS-run facilities, no questions asked. That's in line with a 2013 U.S. Food and Drug Administration decision to lift age limits and make the medication available without a prescription.

Women's health advocates had pushed for a written policy for years, saying verbal directives to IHS area directors in 2012 and 2013 to improve timely access to the pill for women 17 years and older could be rescinded at any time.

"This is a very important victory for Native women but also all women in this country, for something like this to occur in a federal agency during this time when there's so much control by the opposition, by the right-wing," Charon Asetoyer, director of the Lake Andes, South Dakota-based Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center, said Friday. "We really have to look at this through a human rights lens that we are not being denied what other women have access to."

Informal surveys done by the center showed a patchwork of policies at IHS facilities around the country, some of which are run by tribes under contract with the federal government. Dr. Susan Karol, chief medical officer for IHS, said the urban and tribally operated health programs are not required to follow IHS policies.

IHS has no retail pharmacies, so Native women who wanted emergency contraception once had to see a health care provider and get a prescription for the medication that was dispensed on site. The medication is free for Native women because of the federal government's trust obligation to provide health care to them.

Health advocates said that process was time-consuming, burdensome and resulted in Native women having to compete with other patients seeking emergency or urgent care at IHS clinics or hospitals.

Quick, easy access to emergency contraception is crucial considering the prevalence of domestic abuse and rape of Native women, Asetoyer said. One-third of all American Indian and Alaska Native women will be raped in their lifetime, and nearly three of five had been assaulted by their partner, the U.S. Department of Justice has said.

IHS said in 2012 that it was working to finalize a written policy for emergency contraception.

Karol said Friday that IHS sites have been working to obtain the medication and conform to the changing FDA guidelines. She said the new policy has clear expectations that Plan B or a generic equivalent be stocked in pharmacies so that it's easy for Native women to get.

The American Civil Liberties Union said the policy was long overdue.

"Just because you rely on the federal government for your health care doesn't mean you should be subjected to a different standard that makes access more difficult," said Alexa Kolbi-Molina, staff attorney with the ACLU. "Native American women are finally going to be getting the health care they're entitled to and deserved all along."

Direct Link: <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/ef022be710b54611bd1ef37534edf523/policy-makes-plan-b-more-accessible-american-indian-women>

Images of Native Americans in Minnesota Capitol Stir Controversy

By [Guelda Voien](#) | 10/16/15 6:34pm



Attack on New Ulm, Anton Gag, 1904.

The state of Minnesota is having a reckoning: should offensive images be deleted from history?

When the state embarked on a \$309-million, three-year renovation of its state capitol in 2013, the goal was to restore crumbling façades and replace outdated electrical and plumbing equipment. But the matter of how to deal with historic but inaccurate—maybe even racist—art that is usually displayed in the state house has stirred debate.

Four pieces of art that depict Native Americans and are set to reappear when the capitol building re-opens in 2017 have come under fire for inaccurately depicting Native American culture and life.

At issue are: *Father Hennepin at the Falls of St. Anthony*, *Attack on New Ulm*, *Eighth Minnesota at the Battle of Ta-Ha-Kouty* and *Treaty of Traverse des Sioux*. They have been criticized by some Democratic lawmakers in the state for their images of Native Americans. The paintings date to the early 1900s, and depict interactions between whites and Native Americans, often with the Native Americans attacking.

Eighth Minnesota... depicts the Battle of Kildeer Mountain (Ta-Ha-Kouty is a Native American word for the same landform), and the perspective is from behind the whites as they advance on Native American troops up a hill. *Attack on New Ulm*, meanwhile, invokes a stereotype of the violent, brutal Native America, a perpetrator of unprovoked attacks. New Ulm came under siege by a small group of Native Americans in 1862, according to documents from the Minnesota Historical Society. In that work, Native Americans point guns at whites while a building burns in the background.

These images fall firmly within the essentialist framework of the painting of the time, as Dr. Brian Hosmer and Dr. Loretta Fowler, historians at the Newberry Library in Chicago, which specializes in Native American history in the Midwest, have pointed out in their scholarship. “The most prevalent negative images of Midwest Indians in the 18th and 19th centuries showed them killing and/or capturing White people... This message was a one-sided one, that is, the brutality of war was ascribed to Indians alone.”

The paintings also employ stereotypical images of Native Americans—feathered headdresses, topless women—that may not have actually applied. “Some are romanticized visions of Native Americans that portray them in ways that we don’t believe the historical record supports them, in terms of dress and those sorts of things,” Dianne Loeffler, a state legislator, [told Minnesota Public Radio](#). “So, as a place people go to learn history, that’s a concern.”

Of course tired tropes of “the noble savage,” or violent Native Americans or overly racialized images of Native Americans have come under fire before. And at the moment, with the [discussion around the Washington Redskins](#) raging, matters of Native American identity and symbols surrounding Native American culture are receiving due attention.

Now, Minnesota leaders are now mulling whether the works will be displayed at all, highlighting the question—is it more important to have racist works available as documents or to remove racist depictions from public view?

The art subcommittee of the Capitol Preservation Committee met last week; the group's recommendations for how to handle the art come down in January.

Direct Link: <http://observer.com/2015/10/images-of-native-americans-in-minnesota-capitol-stir-controversy/>

Cemetery for slaves, Native Americans to get marker

By - Associated Press - Saturday, October 17, 2015

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) - A proper memorial will finally mark the burial site of up to 80 slaves and Native Americans in a wooded area near Sardis Presbyterian Church in Charlotte.

The Charlotte Observer reports (<http://bit.ly/1Pxribu>) about 20 people plan to gather Saturday at the cemetery where people were buried more than 150 years ago.

A small stone monument will be placed at the site that will alert people that the cemetery "is the final resting place of Afro-American slaves and Native Americans who were baptized communing members of Sardis Presbyterian Church."

The burial ground was used from 1790 to the 1860s.

Direct Link: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/oct/17/cemetery-for-slaves-native-americans-to-get-marker/print/>

Icebergs, polar bears and Inuit villages



National Geographic photographer Ralph Lee Hopkins guides a photo tour in Greenland. Iceberg tours off Ilulissat use local tour boats.

October 18, 2015 7:15 am • [By Anne Z. Cooke Tribune News Service \(TNS\)](#)

The Nitty Gritty:

Cruises to the eastern High Arctic fly through Ottawa, Canada, and include airport transfers and an overnight and dinner there. Flights the next morning continue to Iqaluit, or to Kangerlussuaq, in Greenland. For other Lindblad Expeditions National Geographic cruises go to expeditions.com

WHAT TO BRING: Your cruise material includes complete information about weather, coats, boots and clothes. Knee-high rubber boots are recommended for landing on some wet beaches or marshes, but the most expensive brands are not necessary. We packed our gardening boots and wore them with thick wool socks.

POST CRUISE NEWS: Ten days after returning home we learned that satellite images from space revealed that during our cruise, and while we were at Ilulissat, a Manhattan-size hunk of ice calved into the sea; it was the second such event to occur over the last three years.

ILULISSAT, Greenland — “Shuuss!” said Capt. Oliver Kreuss, standing on the bridge of the Lindblad Expedition-National Geographic ship Explorer, training his binoculars on the iceberg-choked fiord ahead. “I can’t talk now,” he barked, cutting the speed to 6 knots and steering the vessel left and right around each floating titan like a dancer whirling his partner across the floor.

Half-expecting a collision, the half-dozen passengers on the bridge, there to watch the approach to Ilulissat, on Greenland’s ragged west coast, held their breath as the usually garrulous captain nudged the ship forward. Forty minutes later, with clear water and the anchorage ahead, all was forgiven.

“Sorry about that,” said Kreuss, smiling apologetically. “The ship is always my first duty. You were asking about the notches in the rail? Guess. You can’t guess? The notches in the rail represent the number of bear sightings we have in a year. For every bear we see we cut one notch. If the bear has killed and is eating a seal, we color the notch red. After yesterday, we’re adding six more.”

But the Explorer wasn’t the only witness to calving icebergs. While we were exploring the eastern High Arctic, President Obama was in Alaska, in the western High Arctic, highlighting the same issues: shrinking glaciers, rising sea levels, warmer winters and hungry polar bears.

After 10 days on the Explorer, we had a pretty good idea why Lindblad Expeditions has been so successful leading expedition-style voyages to distant regions. In Lindblad’s early days, its ships were considerably more spartan. But after partnering with National

Geographic (in 2004), changes included booking more university-trained naturalist-guides and ramping up the comfort index — the Explorer, for example. The result has been a growing coterie of steadfastly devoted fans.

Most of Lindblad's cruises are booked a year in advance, according to Lindblad's reservation desk. But when a last-minute cancellation opened up space on the 13-day cruise to Greenland and north Baffin Island, we jumped on it. And it didn't take long to see that even the best-planned expedition can't account for nature.

We were supposed to board the Explorer in Iqaluit on south Baffin Island, then sail north through the Davis Strait. But when ice blocked Frobisher Bay, the Explorer couldn't dock. Did Lindblad cancel? Never. With the departure day looming, Kreuss, the "hotel" staff and the crew got to work, booking additional flights for all 140 passengers — at Lindblad's expense — and rescheduling Inuit village visits, tundra hikes, lectures, zodiac fiord tours, naturalist talks, guest lectures, photo clinics, bus rides and glacier over-flies. And they managed it seamlessly.

"They're successful because they're organized," said former investment banker Martha Tinker, of Des Moines, Iowa, who confessed (with an embarrassed chuckle) that having taken not two, nor five, but 13 Lindblad trips, she'd given the matter some thought.

"By that I mean they're prepared," she said as we waited for a Zodiac ride to the shore at Pond Inlet, on north Baffin Island. "They research the destinations so thoroughly that they're never caught by surprise. If something's canceled they have a backup already identified. It happens so smoothly, the passengers don't even notice."

With the sun shining, we took off our coats to explore Inuit villages such as Greenland's Sisimiut, pop. 4453, and Pond Inlet, pop. 5,500, at the north end of Baffin Island. The tour of Sisimiut, a quiet fishing village built on a couple of rocky ridges, meant a long walk uphill and down dale to a history museum, crafts store and a grocery. A half-dozen sled dogs, panting in the heat, snoozed at the end of their doghouse chains. But snow machines and ATVs were ubiquitous. Sisimiut looked neat and prosperous; a Danish territory, Greenland's economy and schools are heavily supported.

Pond Inlet, the Canadian government's effort to bring distant Inuits from their traditional villages to a central location, seemed both more industrial and much poorer. But the Tununiq-miut Dance group's drum dance performance, held at the Community Center, provided a rare opportunity to see a genuine effort to keep some of the old culture.

On other days, guided zodiac fiord rides, shore tours and "walks" were available (no charge for any of them) along with National Geographic photography clinics. We hiked over rocks identified as the world's oldest, searched for 1,000-year-old burial sites and contemplated the fact that before Europeans arrived, the Vikings and two groups of ancestral Inuit lived here.

Sometimes we saw flowers so tiny you had to kneel to appreciate their intricate shapes, 3-inch high willows and silky-fine clumps of musk ox fur, “qiviut” shed during the summer molt, now stuck on last spring’s dead flower stalks. The musk ox were there, somewhere, but remained elusive.

The most fantastic afternoon wound up on a high note with a polar bear encounter. Spotting three bears napping on an ice floe, the ship slowed to a crawl, waiting for the ice to reach us. Meanwhile, the female stood up, stretched and ambled toward the ship, her two nearly grown cubs in tow.

In minutes the cubs were directly below the bow where they spent the next 45 minutes sniffing the air, cuffing each other playfully and stretching out to cool. The female watched it all, then called the cubs and the three ambled away.

Taking a poll at dinner, we asked why our table mates, now new friends, chose Lindblad? They liked recognizing each other from previous trips and were pleased that the waiters remembered them, too. The cabin sizes and the closets, the spacious bathrooms and the menus were universally praised, along with the open bridge policy, allowing visits any time without an appointment. The afternoon tea and pastries were a favorite, as was the casual dress code.

As for the icebergs, it wasn’t long before we were sailing among monstrous hunks, white giants bigger than skyscrapers.

Direct Link: http://tucson.com/ap/travel/icebergs-polar-bears-and-inuit-villages/article_de7955b4-631a-5df8-9d1b-bf2108c65e3f.html

Travels through the Badlands, where the mustangs roam

Inspired by next month’s Native American Heritage Day, Kevin Rushby sets out to explore the Montana and Wyoming prairies



On the bluff ... James Real Bird looking out over Little Bighorn river. All photographs by Kevin Rushby

[Kevin Rushby](#)

Sunday 18 October 2015 07.00 BST Last modified on Sunday 18 October 2015 07.19 BST

At first I walked along the edge of a grassy bluff overlooking the campsite below, admiring the tipis and the horses, but eventually I went down among them. Everyone was preparing or eating breakfast. No one looked at me. Was that significant, I wondered? At these annual tribal pow-wows, a sort of cross between agricultural show, rodeo and fairground, the mood is celebratory and cheerful but they are definitely aimed at tribal members rather than outsiders. Not only that, but this was the Wyoming-Montana border: hard battles had been fought here long ago between the US cavalry and the Native Americans and, no doubt, deep grudges were laid down.

Then, skirting around a clump of cottonwood trees, I walked slap bang into someone's camp. Two large women were frying eggs on a stove while a few grizzled men sat watching from under an awning. Their conversation, which had been in [Crow language](#), petered out when they saw me.

“Good morning.”

It was unclear, for a moment, whether anyone had heard me. No one smiled or replied. The men were all in battered cowboy boots, distressed jeans and plaid shirts, and they sported long, black ponytails. Nearby stood a makeshift horse corral, with half a dozen mustangs milling around.



The Crow Indian tipi camp

“I’m looking for the Real Bird camp.” I said. “Someone told me they take people out riding at Little Bighorn?”

Silence. A few muttered words of Crow. A woman stepped forward and pointed with her cast-iron frying pan: “That’s the Real Bird camp. But there’s no one there right now.”

“OK. Thanks.” Silence. Sometimes the best tactic is to keep still, keep smiling, and ride out uncomfortable moments.

The night before, I had driven into Sheridan, Wyoming, a city named after [the man who reputedly said](#): “The only good Indian is a dead Indian.” This was the man who ordered the seventh cavalry, under his protege, [George Armstrong Custer](#), to exterminate as many Native Americans as possible, slaughter their horses and burn their tipis – hoping the survivors would either freeze or starve to death.

There are seven US towns named after Philip Sheridan. There are also five counties, a mountain, a glacier, countless streets, and a 1960s army tank. Sheridan’s military mentor, William T Sherman, was the general who talked of extermination of the “Plains Indians” as a “final solution”, long before the Nazis used the term. The largest tree in the world is named after Sherman, plus 11 towns, an asteroid and a battle tank. Custer has a city, six counties, two towns and a type of hair extension. The Native Americans, on the other hand, got the Badlands and the measles. The potential for uncomfortable moments is great.



Crow warriors in the dance competition at Crow Fair, Hardin, Montana

At the tipi camp, one of the men eventually turned and said: “You should talk to Mike Yellowmeal.” Pause. “Where you from?” We shook hands. Pete turned out not to be a Crow at all. “I just got to know ’em 20 years ago and been hanging around ever since. Best people in the world.” He grinned. “Sometimes a bit wary.” He lived a nomadic life, moving between towns, taking photographs of horses and sacred landscapes, then selling them to Native Americans at annual pow-wows like this one. “They love their horses. You should talk to Mike. HEY MIKE!”

We pulled our chairs over to Mike’s camp next door and chatted about horses, several of which he had in a pen beside his tipi. After a little while, someone came over and gave me a phone number for the Little Bighorn ride.

Tourism and the Native Americans have had a tricky relationship. Back in 1877, the first holidaymakers to go west arrived a little early – before the cavalry had fully prepared the ground. In one of the more bizarre sequences, a group of tourists in Yellowstone park got entangled in the pursuit of the Nez Perce tribe by Sherman’s cavalry. (“We are not going to let a few thieving, ragged Indians check and stop progress,” Sherman wrote to President Ulysses S Grant.)

In all this, the Crow tribe, it has to be said, did not fare too badly. They had a prophet who warned them not to fight the white man, and so they didn't. When the dust had settled, at the end of the 19th century, they had decent land in Montana that included the site of Custer's final, and fatal, military engagement: [Little Bighorn](#). I rang the number.



Rady for steer-roping at the Crow Fair rodeo Photograph: Kevin Rushby

A few days later, I drove out to a house on a big curve in the Little Bighorn river surrounded by fences, feed boxes and, rather prominently, a mechanical bucking bronco. A young man in a white cowboy hat came out of the house and introduced himself as James Real Bird. There were horses everywhere but he had already picked mine out: "Tarzan. He's a great horse. We use him in the rodeo all the time."

In Britain, whenever I've been riding, the first thing they do is provide you with a helmet. In the US, they look at your feet. James whistled in surprise. "You ain't got boots!" He searched among a mountain of old cowboy footwear and kitted me out. There was no mention of helmets. There were three other people on the ride who clearly knew more than I did about horses. They had boots. We trotted down to the river, splashed across, then rode up on to a bluff overlooking the river. James leaned on the pommel of his saddle.

"You see that notch in those mountains?" He pointed south to where the Wolf mountains rose up. "That's the Crow's Nest lookout. On 25 June, 1876, Custer came there and, looking down here, saw the tipi camp, right where our house is now."



Gambling and church are strong presences in many reservations

Custer's plan was simple: send a detachment of men to distract the warriors to the south while he sneaked around and attacked the camp from the east. Depending on who you believe, his intention was to either round up the women and children as hostages, or slaughter them.

James led us down into a narrow valley. "This here's Cedar Coolie, where Custer came, but he got spotted and the warriors chased him up on the ridge."

Whenever James spoke, I noticed, Tarzan and the other horses listened. We rode down the valley, following Custer's route. Tarzan, I discovered, could turn on a sixpence and was very good at walking backwards. I had been loaned an equine Ferrari. Where the valley opened out we could see the hill rise up to the battle monument. "That's where Custer made his last stand and was killed," said James.

"Do you ever watch cowboy movies?" I asked.

He laughed. "No! But there is a movie called [Little Big Man](#) that I kinda liked. My dad was an extra in it. They shot the final battle scene right here."



Wyoming-Montana border territory near the Bear Claw Pass

Little Bighorn, of course, proved to be a hollow victory for the Native Americans, who were soon after defeated and sent to reservations. I visited one of the more well-known reservations: Pine Ridge. In the US the name is a byword for social deprivation and substance abuse but that is only one side of the story. Here, amid miles of lovely, rolling grassland, you can escape the endless tarmac and chain restaurants of modern America and get a feel for what the prairie once was. It is also home to talented Indian artists and I went to visit one of them: [Evans Flammond Senior](#).

We drove through the spectacular [Badlands national park](#) and then south to Wounded Knee creek, scene of a notorious massacre that marked the tragic end of the "Indian wars". There are no fast-food concessions or tour buses here, just a lonely hilltop cemetery where descendants of the victims have tied feathers and ribbons as tributes on a white picket fence around the stone memorial.

Further into the reservation, we found Evans in his half-built house-cum-studio, painting a set of traditional eagle feathers. He was a huge bear of a man in Hawaiian shirt and Bermuda shorts. “They’re not real eagle feathers,” he admitted. “Federal law don’t allow it.”



Ledger art ... Evans Flammond painting warriors on old account books.

All around were examples of his astonishing talent for modern interpretations of traditional arts and crafts: an electric-blue horse’s head-dress and a decorated spear. But it was his “ledger paintings”, that most caught my attention. “When the wars were over, our people had no access to materials to paint on, so they used old pages torn from the ledger books of the government agents.”

Evans took me close up to the pictures and I could make out, behind the over-painting, the old-fashioned calligraphic handwriting of the bookkeepers: “One stack of hay – \$8. One gallon whiskey – 37½c.” Over such prosaic entries the ledger artists recorded, and still record, their dreams and visions: battle scenes, horses and wildlife. What had started as an expedient use of waste paper had become a subtle form of revenge – the white man’s obsession with money, so neatly laid out in black and white, flooded by a wild tide of colour.

In the corner of the studio, I leafed through Evans’s stock of as yet unpainted, ledger books, a window into a lost world of the wild west and its accountancy practices. On this analysis, the lawless frontier had fewer pistols and much more in the way of sewing supplies, ribbons and hay. Among all these lists of pioneer shopping, I found a sheet showing the accounts of one branch of the Custer family, not George Armstrong, but a great uncle perhaps. It was too good to resist, I immediately commissioned Evans to scatter some of his wild mustangs across the page, an act of artistic licence which, he agreed, would be immensely pleasurable.

• The trip was organised by DiscoverAmerica.com. [British Airways](http://BritishAirways) flies daily to Denver from Heathrow (one stop) from £524 return. Rail travel was provided by [Holiday Extras](http://HolidayExtras) (0800 977 5171). Rides across Little Big Horn battlefield with the Real Bird family cost \$100 for three hours, \$50 for 1h30m: to book call +1 406 620 6392. Contact Evans Flammond Senior at dreamhorsecreations5150.com

Native spirit: getting in touch with tradition

A new generation of Native Americans are emerging who can celebrate what was good in their past and still make their way in modern America. Pow-wows are a great way to meet and talk to Native Americans, and see their dances, rodeos and artistic traditions. There are also fabulous native sites, museums and cultural events that can help orientate visitors.

San Francisco is home to the [American Indian film festival](#), which mixes films on social issues with traditional storytelling, and you can talk to the filmmakers.



Navajo girls in Monument Valley, Arizona. Photograph: Getty Images

Arizona restaurants are developing Native American cuisine: Fry Bread House in **Phoenix** and [Desert Rain Café](#) in **Sells**, close to Tucson, are the pick of the bunch. Arizona also has the [Navajo National Monument](#), a 750-year-old village clinging to cliff faces in the spectacular Tsegi Canyon east of Tuba City. And for iconic western scenery, hire a Navajo guide to tour the backcountry of **Monument Valley** navajonationparks.org.

Santa Fe, New Mexico, is a pretty town whose August [Indian Arts Market](#) is a huge draw. Art made by people from many of the US's 566 tribes is normally on display in the stalls and booths. To sample the power of modern Indian life, head to **Albuquerque** for the [Gathering of Nations pow-wow](#) (gatheringofnations.com), the largest in North America. Next one is 29-30 April, 2016.

The Gilcrease Museum in **Tulsa, Oklahoma**, houses the US's largest collection of Native American artefacts and art, a good place to start before heading to **Oklahoma City's** [Red Earth Festival](#) in June, with representatives of over 100 tribes. In 2017 the city will open its American Indian Cultural Center and Museum.

The [Denver Art Museum](#) has a huge collection of Indian art plus its own pow-wow, the Friendship, held in September. The city is also home to the US's second-largest gathering, the [Denver March Pow-wow](#).



Women's steer-roping contest at the Crow Fair. Photograph: Kevin Rushby

The [Crow Fair](#) is held near **Hardin, Montana**, and the Little [Big Horn Battlefield site](#) in August.

South Dakota has lots of summer pow-wows (travelsd.com) and **Rapid City** has [Prairie's Edge](#), an excellent gallery and shop for native art.

If you're not able to go west, [New York has a pow-wow in Queens](#), plus the world's largest private collection of Indian artefacts at the [National Museum of American Indian Art](#) in Manhattan, where beautiful objects from over 1,200 indigenous peoples are on display.

Direct Link: <http://www.theguardian.com/travel/2015/oct/18/native-american-us-montana-wyoming>

Native American community remains divided on UND nickname

ANNA BURLESON Forum News Service

Updated Oct 20, 2015

GRAND FORKS, N.D. -- Late last week, two American Indian tribe members put their names to a lawsuit filed with the intent of stopping the University of North Dakota's upcoming nickname vote.

The documents allege there was no Sioux representation in the process of developing a plan to pick a new nickname and then implementing it. It also protests members of the Sioux Nations aren't among the chosen group of stakeholders who can vote on a new name beginning Monday morning.

"In other words, someone with no other ties to UND other than the purchase of a season ticket is allowed to participate in the vote on the nickname selection, but not the members of the Sioux Nations, who bestowed the name to UND," court documents state.

R.J. Morin, a UND student and a member of the Turtle Mountain band of Chippewa, didn't want to say he was "over it," but that pretty much sums up how he feels about UND's nickname and logo.

As a busy student majoring in music, Morin said even though he was a member of the task force that developed the process his school has used to pick a new flag to fly, he's too busy with other matters to care anymore.

"At this point, I'm a person who has kind of stepped away from it as a whole," he said. "We can never seem to satisfy everybody. I'm at the point of I'm going to do what i'm going to do, they're going to do what they're going to do."

United Tribes Technical College President Leander "Russ" McDonald, a Spirit Lake tribe member and former tribal chairman, served on the committee that narrowed down the list of names submitted by the public. He said he felt the time for everyone's voice to be heard has passed with a statewide vote in 2012, nickname task force forums held across the state in late 2014 and the monthlong nickname submission period in April.

"What I was hearing from folks was that their voices weren't being heard on the Fighting Sioux issue, but there was a statewide vote and the majority of North Dakota voted we had to change it," he said. "I think the opportunity for everyone's voice to be heard was at that time, and we have to move forward from that."

A long story

Spirit Lake Sioux tribe member Lavonne Alberts and William Le Caine, a member of the Wood Mountain Lakota Sioux in Saskatchewan and Cheyenne River Sioux in South Dakota, feel differently, as they are part of the legal action taken last week to stop the nickname vote.

In court documents, Alberts and Le Caine said if the vote is allowed to continue, it will injure UND's relationship with Sioux tribes.

"Our tribes should have had a seat at the table in all discussions dating back to the NCAA lawsuit," Alberts said in the document.

The Fighting Sioux name, which UND had used since the 1930s, was retired almost three years ago after the NCAA threatened sanctions and the terms of a settlement that would have allowed UND to use the image weren't met.

Spirit Lake Sioux tribe member Erich Longie has historically been opposed to using the Fighting Sioux name. He said the people of North Dakota, including those at UND, went as far as they could to keep the old name.

But now that a new name is in sight, people will look back years from now and see this as a huge step forward for the state, he said.

"To me, a nickname doesn't seem that important to me," Longie said. "Do we need a seat at the table? It would be really nice if they included us because we are a significant population, but it's just a nickname and whatever they choose, it's just a nickname."

The nickname task force that developed the voting plan surveyed 7,603 people online, and according to the December report, voters thought alumni, students and student athletes should have the most involvement in narrowing down nickname ideas. "North Dakota Tribal Members" ranked 13th on the list, and state legislators came in last.

UND spokesman Peter Johnson told the Herald Friday the vote on the Fighting Hawks, Nodaks, North Stars, Roughriders and Sundogs will take place as planned barring any action taken by the courts.

But Sioux nickname supporters are still fighting regardless. At a protest in August to put UND/North Dakota on the ballot, longtime proponent of the Fighting Sioux name and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe member Archie Fool Bear said a 1969 ceremony where Native Americans gave the name to UND was binding and should be honored.

"When the name was given here, a ceremony was performed along those same lines of strength and significance giving the university the right to use the name," he said. "The NCAA has no say over that."

The lawsuit also notes the ceremony, and Alberts, who was involved with the ceremony, is suing for damages "in an amount to be provided at trial."

"I understand UND's definition of donor; it does not include the Sioux as donors, despite the gift of our name to UND," Alberts said in an affidavit.

Continued controversy

After the NCAA banned the use of Native American imagery in 2005, UND and the state took legal action to keep its nickname, which had already been the subject of controversy.

In 2006, the UND Indian Association student group voted 26-2 to oppose the Fighting Sioux name, and UND reached a settlement agreement a year later with the NCAA, giving them three years to acquire approval from two tribes in the state. The Spirit Lake Sioux Tribe passed a referendum in 2009 in support of using the nickname, but the Standing Rock Sioux tribe failed to ever put a referendum up for discussion.

Longie said the Standing Rock referendum ultimately wouldn't have mattered because new tribal council members could change their position.

"The next council comes around. They could withdraw that permission, and you don't want to start a billion-dollar enterprise on one tribal council," Longie said. "I don't mean that in a bad way, but you don't want to. Their whims could change."

Jesse Taken Alive was active in seeking retirement of the Fighting Sioux nickname over the past decade and was a Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Council member at the time. His son also attended UND, and Taken Alive said the issue became real for him when he heard about how students were being negatively affected by the logo.

"Nobody will know how many dreams were dashed or how many (students) experienced pain and dropped out, changed schools, because of this issue," Taken Alive said.

He has documents showing the tribal council at Standing Rock continuously opposing the use of the name, passing motions on the matter in 1992, 1998, 2005, 2007 and twice in 2011.

In 2008, the council voted to let the members of the tribe decide, but it was delayed by a moratorium, citing the financial burden of organizing it.

Taken Alive said another vote on the issue would have been redundant.

"We've been opposing and haven't changed our position," Taken Alive said.

Taken Alive said he thought UND's process of picking a new name was acceptable, and while those at Standing Rock would have participated if they had been invited, he respects how the university proceeded.

"We're thankful," he said. "We're not upset; we're just thankful. We intended to hurt no one, but we felt a need to defend our children, our young people, from more racial tension."

In July, the UND nickname committee voted 7-4 to eliminate continuing to play as UND or North Dakota from the vote, despite its wide popularity. UND President Robert Kelley briefly considered keeping it as an option but ultimately chose not to, saying it wasn't what was best for the university.

Longie said, in his eyes, those who want to keep playing as UND or North Dakota have ulterior motives.

"They want to remain without a nickname so they could some time in the future reinstate Fighting Sioux," he said.

Morin, on the other hand, is just ready to put everything behind him and doesn't plan to vote.

"I'm proud of UND and where I went to school, but I don't have that attachment to UND like some others do," he said. "I've completely checked from it all together. Whatever they pick, it's not going to have any side effects on me as a person because it's a nickname I don't play sports for."

Direct Link: http://billingsgazette.com/sports/college/native-american-community-remains-divided-on-und-nickname/article_abcf183b7-3fef-5645-bcec-ded522c8595e.html

SD wants regents to handle Native-American college-readiness program

October 17, 2015 7:00 am • Associated Press

PIERRE | South Dakota has selected the state Board of Regents to administer a Native American college-readiness grant under scrutiny after an apparent murder-suicide, the state said in a letter sent to the U.S. Department of Education this week.

If the federal department approves the shift of the program to the regents, it is possible that the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology would partner with Black Hills State University to administer the program known as GEAR UP, according to previously published reports.

South Dakota Secretary of Education Melody Schopp said in the letter that her department will keep providing oversight of the GEAR UP grant. The grant's future has been uncertain since the state decided not to renew its contract with Mid Central Educational Cooperative for federal GEAR UP program administration.

Authorities suspect Mid Central employee Scott Westerhuis shot his wife and four children last month and then set the family home near Platte ablaze before shooting himself. That was just hours after the state Department of Education informed Mid Central that it was losing its most recent \$4.3 million GEAR UP contract.

Schopp cited financial problems and failures to follow proper accounting procedures at Mid-Central as reasons not to renew the grant.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard said in a letter sent this month to the chairman of a legislative oversight committee that he has asked Attorney General Marty Jackley to examine beyond Westerhuis for evidence of wrongdoing in the administration of GEAR UP.

Schopp said in the letter to the U.S. Department of Education that the Board of Regents is well-suited to take on administration of the grant. She said the state Education Department and the regents are developing a "detailed plan that would result in minimal disruption to services being provided through the grant."

Training will be required for staff with decision-making authority over the grant to ensure that expenditures are reasonable and allowable, she said. The agency also wants to dedicate a full-time position to managing GEAR UP to "ensure successful oversight," Schopp said.

A U.S. Education Department spokesman has previously said the agency has two days to make a decision upon receiving a request about replacing the grant administrator. The agency didn't immediately respond to a request for comment Friday.

Schopp said the state is "anxious" to continue services that would assist some of the state's highest-risk students. Regents System Vice President for Academic Affairs Paul Turman said in a letter to Schopp this week that the Board of Regents looks forward to collaborating with the department.

Mines for many years has hosted the summer GEAR UP camp for students. In his letter, Daugaard said Black Hills State University might become involved in a partnership.

Heather A. Wilson, president of Mines, and Tom Jackson Jr., president of BHSU, said in recent interviews they would be interested in working on such a partnership.

Reached Friday evening, Wilson reiterated that the partnership is possible, considering that the two schools have experience that would benefit GEAR UP.

However, she said, "We're in kind of a holding pattern" until the federal department approves the state's plan.

Direct Link: http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/sd-wants-regents-to-handle-native-american-college-readiness-program/article_ac0c5f8b-5cb1-52e6-8f7a-a91570a62764.html

Local Native American parent wants 'Redskins' banned at MCPS

17 Oct 2015

Written by Kathleen Stubbs

ROCKVILLE – A local parent is asking board of education members to ban staffers and students from wearing jerseys and clothing with the Washington Redskins name or logo at Montgomery County Public Schools.

Jared Hautamaki, a Native American MCPS parent, addressed the board of education Tuesday, requesting the dress code change the same day the board voted to declare November as American Indian Heritage Month.

The Native American Bar Association D.C. is scheduled to meet Oct. 27 to discuss a resolution which would be sent to the board of education reinforcing Hautamaki's request, said Hautamaki a NABA D.C. board member.

In the letter, the NABA would ask the MCPS board of education to amend the dress code to prohibit staff and students from wearing sports team merchandise bearing Native American mascots, which Hautamaki said is offensive to Native Americans.

He said the local National Football League team logo is "a stereotyped image of a Plains Indian."

Hautamaki, whose son attends kindergarten at Highland Elementary School, said he does not think students and staff at public schools should be permitted to wear clothing bearing what he considered a racial slur.

"My kids deserve an environment free from racism and stereotype images," said Hautamaki, later adding "It's not just a slur; it's a problem with cultural appropriation."

The decision whether to place the ban is not up to him but to the County government.

MCPS spokesperson Dana Tofig said parents in the past expressed similar sentiments at a few county schools and in each case, the staff addressed the complaint within the school.

Tofig said this will continue to be the solution.

"At this point, it is definitely a school issue and we're handling it as such," he said.

North Potomac resident Dawn Houle, who is also Native American, said when her family went to a Germantown Green Turtle restaurant last year, which happened to be showing a Redskins football game, her son, then age 7, asked about why people made fun of Native Americans.

A man dressed in buckskin and a headdress hooted, hollered and screamed, and then walked around the restaurant asking to take a picture with families there, said Houle.

When the man approached Houle's table, Houle said her family refused and requested takeout.

“My child was horrified and terrified (by the impression),” she said.

Houle, who grew up on the Chippewa Cree reservation in Montana, mentioned her son is the only Native American at his elementary school.

She said she wished the Washington Redskins owner Dan Snyder would change the team mascot.

“Why it is specifically offensive to me and my family is that there is a complete lack of understanding of the first people in our country,” Houle said.

California Gov. Jerry Brown (D) recently signed a bill into law banning the name Redskins and its associated logos from schools.

Meredith Curtis, a spokesperson for the American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland, said the proposed ban on clothing with the Redskins name or logo might be considered permissible.

“Given recent court rulings, in a public school context such a resolution to prohibit wearing the logo of the Washington, D.C. NFL team might be permissible,” Curtis said.

Curtis referenced the 2013 court case *Hardwick v. Heyward*, during which upheld a Confederate Flag ban.

“As part of the ruling in that case, the court went back to the Civil Rights Era to find that the ban was justified because historical racial tensions in the area created a reasonable threat of disruption,” Curtis said.

Houle’s husband, Milo Booth, said part of what makes the logo offensive is people may think that is how Native Americans should look.

He said it is harmful to the development of Native American children because they may think they are someone else’s mascot or stuffed animal.

He said the mascot is “borderline caricaturish.”

“People are influenced by what they see on television – either in athletics or a John Wayne movie,” said Booth. “This affects the way other races perceive Native Americans and how natives perceive themselves. If people never see who fits that description, they think they’re not offending anybody.

“I think we should be the ones telling our next generation what’s acceptable, what they should be saying, how they should be acting,” added Booth.

Direct Link: <http://www.thesentinel.com/mont/sports/item/2669-local-native-american-parent-wants-redskins-banned-at-mcps>

Pioneer uniforms an insult to Native Americans

By Brian Klopotek

For The Register-Guard

Oct. 18, 2015

As a coalition of Native American faculty, staff, students, alumni, community members and allies from the campus community and across the state, we write to express our disappointment in the Oct. 10 debut of Nike's pioneer-themed uniforms for the University of Oregon home game against Washington State.

According to Nike's press release, the new uniforms are intended to "emphasize Oregon state history" and honor the "Maverick heritage ... embodied by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark," "trailblazers" of the innovation, free-thinking and risk-taking that defines Oregon state history.

The westward expansion of the United States, however, was rooted not in transcendent universal values but in white supremacy, and in a sense of divine obligation of free white men to take — by force if necessary — the land belonging to the nonwhite nations west of the Mississippi.

The history of genocidal violence, ethnic cleansing and exclusion of nonwhites that followed in Oregon is well documented.

But instead of condemning this process, the celebration of Lewis and Clark valorizes it, papering over the ongoing consequences of colonization and indigenous traditions of "exploration," "innovation," "free-thinking" and "risk-taking" that existed in this place long before the expedition arrived at the Pacific Coast.

As UO alum and Grand Ronde tribal member David Lewis notes, the celebration of U.S. expansionism as an unmitigated historical and moral good is at odds not only with history, but with recent efforts by the university to strengthen relations with Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes and to better support indigenous faculty, staff and students on campus.

This celebration also undermines the time and effort Nike has expended over the past few years developing the native-inspired N7 product line.

Upon public dissent from tribal peoples following Nike's announcement, the UO initiated steps in the lead-up to the Oct. 10 game to address these disconnects, including the

addition of a helmet decal meant to represent indigenous peoples in Oregon and the nine sovereign tribal governments, as well as public address and television copy that explicitly acknowledged the ongoing presence of tribal peoples in the state.

Such efforts, however, give the impression that the nine tribes endorse the pioneer theme, or that a simple acknowledgment of native presence as an afterthought adequately addresses the more substantive issue of the public face of the flagship institution in the state celebrating the violent, at times genocidal, practices of conquest in the region.

We would like to reframe this event as a teaching moment that might productively acknowledge the monumental significance of the Lewis and Clark expedition/invasion by embracing and representing all of the communities which were and continue to be affected by it. We thus encourage the UO Athletic Department and Nike to act swiftly to remove the uniforms from future use and recall all “special edition” paraphernalia from retail stores.

We further suggest that the Athletic Department and Nike refrain from any future celebrations of what remains a contested history, and conduct meaningful consultation with tribes and administrative and academic officials earlier in project development to avoid future missteps like these.

By openly and critically acknowledging how words, actions, thoughts, representations, and policies affect one another, we can begin to bring our communities together around shared histories of experience that draw us all into relationship.

Brian Klopotek (Choctaw), an associate professor of ethnic and Native American studies at the University of Oregon, writes on behalf of Native Strategic Initiatives at the UO. This statement is also signed by Kirby Brown, Department of English (Cherokee Nation); Jennifer O’Neal, UO Libraries and Honors College (Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde); Melina Pastos, UO Office of Academic Advising (Flathead descendant); Leilani Sabzalian, a Ph.D. candidate in the UO College of Education (Alutiiq); Angie Morrill, a UO graduate (Klamath tribes), and Scott Pratt, dean of the UO Graduate School.

Direct Link: <http://registerguard.com/rg/opinion/33604933-78/pioneer-uniforms-an-insult-to-native-americans.html.csp>

Human rights commission ruling gives hope for Costa Rica indigenous autonomy

John McPhaul
3 days ago



Indigenous groups meet with government mediators in Salitre, Puntarenas, on Monday, July 7, 2014.

Costa Rican indigenous leaders hope the long-delayed Indigenous Autonomy Bill might finally get a hearing in the Legislative Assembly as result of April's Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ruling [ordering the government to take precautionary measures](#) to protect indigenous groups in the Salitre Indigenous Reserve in southwestern Costa Rica.

Indigenous leaders said the bill, which would create new forms of governing the reserves and provide indigenous communities more self-rule, could offer the government a way to resolve the contentious issues in Salitre, where an indigenous movement to retake land – percolating since early 2012 – has sparked a violent reaction from non-indigenous people who claim ownership.

“It could be that [the Indigenous Autonomy Bill] provides the government with a policy that helps resolve conflicts like Salitre,” said Donald Rojas, a Brunca member of the Mesa Indígena, an ad hoc group that has been pressuring for passage of the bill since it was first drafted 19 years ago.

The bill is opposed by powerful interest groups including large landowners and mining companies that have their eyes on mineral deposits inside some of the 24 indigenous reserves, including large copper reserves in the highlands of the Talamanca Mountains that run through Panama and southern Costa Rica.

The government already has parceled out the Talamanca region to mining companies in concessions that cover virtually the entire Talamanca highland, but final approval is pending votes by the Legislative Assembly.

The approval of mining inside indigenous reserves without the consent of the indigenous people to whom they belong would be a violation of the [International Labour Organization Convention No. 169](#), to which Costa Rica is a signatory.

Costa Rican Communications Minister Mauricio Herrera said President Luis Guillermo Solís' administration would uphold the country's international commitments regarding its indigenous population.

“The government is respectfully committed to the international conventions the country has signed on the subject of indigenous people’s rights,” Herrera said.

But indigenous leaders said they want the convention signed into Costa Rican law, which would occur with the passage of the Indigenous Autonomy Bill, which makes the ILO convention the guideline for protecting indigenous rights in the reserves.

Bribri leader José Dualok Rojas, brother of the controversial Salitre Bribri leader Sergio Rojas, said another government might not be as faithful in applying the ILO convention in preventing mining in indigenous territories.

“What is certain is that the concessions are adjudicated to the multinational companies, and that makes for a latent risk,” said José Dualok Rojas. “Any politician can have a change of heart or can do something foolish.”

Bribri Iiria

Bribri cosmology sees the Earth and its ecosystems as a sacred living being called Iiria. That precludes any mining inside indigenous territory, José Dualok Rojas added.

He also voiced the hope that the government would now be moved to pass the autonomy bill under pressure by the IACHR order for precautionary measures.

“Now because of all the problems with Salitre, they are going to present this bill as a possible solution to the conflict,” José Dualok Rojas said.

Other indigenous supporters are not as optimistic.

“I very much doubt it,” said University of Costa Rica anthropologist Marcos Guevara, regarding passage of the autonomous bill. “As much as I would like to see it happen, there’s just too much opposition to it in the Legislative Assembly.”

Another source of pressure for its passage is a [July 15 report](#) by Gabriella Habtom, secretary of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, citing “the grave and persistent violation of indigenous people’s rights in Costa Rica.”

“This report addresses the pattern of pervasive, long-standing and inter-connected violations or denials of the rights of indigenous peoples in the Republic of Costa Rica, and the ongoing situation of impunity in which they occur and persist,” Habtom wrote.

The current Indigenous Law, signed in 1977, gives indigenous communities dominion over indigenous reserves, but gives power over governance to the central government institutions such as the National Commission of Indigenous Affairs (CONAI) and the National Community Development Directorate (DINADECO).

Indigenous leaders complain that both institutions defend more the interests of non-indigenous people than indigenous communities. Moreover, the indigenous complain that neither institution has done anything to recover land for indigenous communities within the 24 reserves, an estimated 60 percent of which is occupied by non-indigenous landholders.

Some of the land is in the hands of “whites” who occupied it prior to 1977 when the Indigenous Law went into effect and who must be compensated if removed from the territory. But much of the land is in the hands of non-indigenous people who squatted on it after 1977 or illegally purchased it backed only by a bill of sale.

Indigenous leaders blame the failure of the government to bring order in the past 38 years for the rise of an indigenous movement in Salitre to take back the land and confront non-indigenous “owners” who try to prevent them – sometimes violently – from retaking it.

Matrilineal clans

While the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights found in favor of Bribri and Teribe peoples, Herrera said the issue is more complicated than a conflict between indigenous and non-indigenous.

The Bribri are divided into matrilineal clans, Herrera said, meaning that an individual's identity within the community is determined by whether or not that person's mother is Bribri. Someone whose father is Bribri and mother is Cabécar – a group closely related to the Bribri – is considered Cabécar, not Bribri.

The indigenous movement headed by Salitre Integral Indigenous Development Association President Sergio Rojas has attempted to reestablish a Bribri social order in the community, and Rojas has been accused of intimidating indigenous individuals who are not “of clan.”

Rojas denies he has intimidated anyone and said that people of mixed heritage are welcome in the reserve – as long as they accept the decisions of the development association.

Sary Sosa, a Cabécar farmer, [told the daily La Nación](#) that she feels threatened by Rojas, even after multiple community meetings. She characterized the situation as a division between the “indigenous that go with Sergio Rojas and the indigenous who don't go with Sergio Rojas.”

“I don't go with anything that he says,” Sosa said. “I don't respect him as a leader. I don't accept him, I don't want him, I would even like them to take him out of the territory.”



Police intervene in an indigenous conflict in Salitre, in July 2014.

(Courtesy of Public Security Ministry)

‘Violence brings violence’

Last week DINADECO removed Rojas from the presidency of the development association alleging that he was barred from public service by a court order after serving seven months of preventive detention for alleged irregularities in the management of a government environmental services fund (FONAFIFO). Rojas said the charges were trumped up because of his advocacy in the Salitre controversy, which has seen multiple cases of violence directed at indigenous families.

Rojas told La Nación that the Bribrí would defend themselves from violence aimed at them if necessary. “Violence brings violence,” Rojas warned.

“If the state doesn’t guarantee our security and our rights, we have to act as we have done; we have to find a way to guarantee our survival. And if violence occurs, it will be the fault of the state,” Rojas said.

Rojas’ supporters said the Bribrí leader has been the target of political persecution by the government, which is threatened by the emergence of a strong indigenous leader capable of starting a movement to reclaim indigenous land at the national level.

“Because of the circumstances, he has taken a very strong position, and the violent actions aimed at [Sergio Rojas’ group] has caused him to make some mistakes,” said Donald Rojas, who is not related to the Bribrí brothers.

Donald Rojas said a lively debate is underway within the Solís administration on whether or not to press forward with the Indigenous Autonomy Bill at the Legislative Assembly.

According to Cinia Jiménez, of the Legislative Assembly’s Office of Citizen Participation, the Indigenous Autonomy Bill (No. 14,352) currently is 37th on the Assembly’s docket. That means it likely will not come up during the Assembly’s ordinary session that ends in November. The Solís administration, however, would have an opportunity to bring the bill before the Assembly in an extraordinary session that begins in December and lasts through April 2016.

One powerful voice against the indigenous autonomy issue is governing Citizen Action Party founder and lawmaker Ottón Solís. He wrote an opinion piece [that appeared in the daily La Nación](#) on Oct. 21, 2014 criticizing Sergio Rojas' Salitre movement as collectivist and in conflict with Costa Rica's Constitution.

Lawmaker Ottón Solís didn't respond to a request for comment.

Donald Rojas said a dose of racism also lies behind some of the opposition to the Indigenous Autonomy Bill.

Said Donald Rojas: "There are those who say that we should be made to live like white people, that we should modernize ourselves."

Direct Link: <http://www.ticotimes.net/2015/10/18/human-rights-commission-ruling-gives-hope-for-costa-rica-indigenous-autonomy>

Indigenous People's History Day marks first celebration in Redding

Amber Sandhu

4:06 PM, Oct 17, 2015

2:23 PM, Oct 19, 2015



REDDING, California - Indigenous People's History Day marked its first celebration in downtown Redding on Saturday.

Hosted by the Shasta Historical Society, the program included a street fair in front of the Cascade Theatre, where information booths allowed people to learn about Native American history. In addition, arts and crafts vendors showcased clothing and jewelry, and powwow dancers performed and interpreted traditional dances, which were followed by a history program inside the theater.

The historical part of the program included five speakers from the Wintu, Yana, Atsugewi, Pit River and Winnemem Wintu tribes, who honored their ancestors, each telling a different story of triumph.

Jack Potter Jr., chairman at Redding Rancheria and a presenter at the historical program, told the story of Buckskin Jack from the Atsugewi tribe. Potter said he's proud to know the Indigenous People's History Day Show and Street Fair will now be an annual event in Redding. "This is the first time that all the tribes have come together," he said. "It will be healing for Indian country."

Potter said it's important for people to understand his history and know that the culture is still alive and being passed down generations later.

Christine Stokes, executive director of the Shasta Historical Society, said she and her team wanted to showcase the history of some of the underrepresented communities in Shasta County. The idea came to her after the success they had with the Black History Month program in February that showcased stories of four black residents living in the North State.

Understanding the importance of the Native American tribes and their contribution to Shasta County history, the society reached out to the community and were met with immediate interest. She said an advisory committee was formed and plans were immediately in the works to celebrate Indigenous People's History Day. The plans had been eight months and in the making, Stokes said. "It's a great way for people to know the history," she said. "It's also a celebration of the local community."

She said it was especially important to bring to light the suffering caused by the 1850 Act for the Government and Protection of Indians. She said it not only caused the displacement of many Indians, but it also was the reason why they ended up in boarding school systems. "We're just at the beginning to understand the history," Stokes said.

She said because the history of the indigenous people in Shasta County was a "tough history," it was important to show the historical society was committed to bringing their history forward in a sensitive way and to a larger audience.

"It's a day of celebration, a day of healing and a day of understanding," she said.

Direct Link: http://www.redding.com/news/local-news/indigenous-peoples-history-day-marks-first-celebration-in-redding_02270807

Celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day in Minneapolis and St. Paul

By [Mary Turck](#) | 10/12/15

Yes — October 12 is Indigenous Peoples Day in the Twin Cities! Celebrating means recognizing the legacy and continuing contributions of Native Americans to this country and state. As [Congressmember Keith Ellison said last year](#), during the Minneapolis debate:

“The very foundation of the United States, the theoretical concept of it, offered to our nation by the Iroquois Confederacy, as we were told growing up, ‘Oh, this is from the Greeks.’ We weren’t told about the Iroquois Confederacy, but we learned about it. And now that we have established Indigenous Peoples Day, every child – whether that child is Native, or whether that child is not – will learn the truth about where America really, really comes from.”

For years, protesters denounced the federal holiday of Columbus Day, pointing out that this holiday honored conquest, rape, genocide, enslavement, and theft. (See [Five reasons to cancel Columbus Day](#).) The Christian Science Monitor summarizes:

“Although debates rage on about exactly how much damage Europeans inflicted on Native populations immediately after their arrival, some estimate that [up to 90 percent](#) of the continent’s first inhabitants died from warfare, enslavement, or diseases, violence which carried into the American government’s discriminatory policies through the 19th and early 20th century, and are still felt today, [when 25 percent live in poverty](#), versus the US average of 15 percent.”

In Minnesota, the poverty rate is [even higher](#): 32 percent in 2014, compared to 8 percent for non-Hispanic whites. In Minnesota, Native Americans have the [lowest high school graduation rate](#) of any racial or ethnic group.

But Indigenous Peoples Day is a day to celebrate strengths. [The Circle quoted](#) Jay Badheart Bull last year, explaining, “we’re still here, we’re still vibrant, we’re still contributing to make this a better city and a better state over all.”

Minneapolis and St. Paul have joined a growing movement to change Columbus Day to Native American Day. [South Dakota led the way](#), back in 1990, changing Columbus Day to Native American Day. ([HuffPost says](#) that “at least a dozen states” don’t observe the federal holiday.)

Berkeley was the first city to change the second-Monday-in-October observance to Indigenous Peoples Day, acting way back in 1992 on the quincentennial of the Columbus voyage. Now Berkeley has been joined by more than a dozen other cities, many in the past two weeks, showing strong momentum for change. The honor roll includes:

- Albuquerque, New Mexico
- Alpena, Michigan
- Andadarko, Oklahoma
- Berkeley, California

- Bexar County, Texas
- [Carrboro, North Carolina](#)
- Lawrence, Kansas
- Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Olympia, Washington
- Portland, Oregon
- Saint Paul, Minnesota
- Seattle, Washington
- and
- [Akron/Newstead/Lewiston](#) in Ontario

Want to join the celebration in the Twin Cities? You can [begin the day](#) at 7:15 a.m. with a sunrise ceremony at Thomas Beach at Bde Maka Ska. A Red Shawl Round Dance at the American Indian Center at 9 will be followed by a brunch catered by Powwow Grounds, and a panel discussion. (And if you can't make it this morning, take time to visit Powwow Grounds some other time soon.) For a change of pace, finish the day with the Indigenous Peoples Day Hip Hop Show at Augsburg College from 5-8:30 p.m. St. Paul officially observes Indigenous Peoples Day from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Crowne Plaza (11 E. Kellogg in downtown St. Paul.)

The next challenge: changing the federal holiday.

This post was written by Mary Turck and originally published on [News Day](#). Follow Mary on Twitter: [@maryturck](#).

Direct Link: <https://www.minnpost.com/minnesota-blog-cabin/2015/10/celebrate-indigenous-peoples-day-minneapolis-and-st-paul>

Agencies defend Native American children adoption law

By: [Howard Fischer, Capitol Media Services](#) October 19, 2015 , 12:11 pm



State and federal agencies are asking a judge to throw out legal claims by several Arizonans that a 37-year old federal law harms and illegally discriminates against Native American children.

In court filings Friday, attorneys for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the state Department of Child Safety acknowledged the Indian Child Welfare Act does require state courts when placing Indian children for adoption to give preference to a member of the child's extended family. That is followed by priority by other members of the child's tribe and, ultimately, other Indian families.

But they told U.S. District Court Judge Neil Wake that Congress had a valid reason for approving the law.

"In particular, Congress found that there is no resource that is more vital to the continued existence and integrity of Indian tribes than their children," the lawyers for the federal government wrote.

And Dawn Williams, an assistant state attorney general, told Wake he should not disturb the law.

"The federal law was enacted to remediate generations of forced assimilation that weakened to severed Indian children to their tribes," she wrote. And she said the lawsuit cites only "nebulous speculative harm" to the children at issue in this case.

The lawyers also told Wake that the lawsuit, filed by the Goldwater Institute on behalf of non-Indian families and the Native American children they want to adopt is based on a flaw that such a preference amounts to illegal racial discrimination.

They said the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that classifications based on tribal membership — like those in this law — "are political, not racial classifications." And such distinctions, they argued, particularly for sovereign entities like Native American tribes are permitted.

The lawsuit, filed in July, contends the law illegally places the desire of tribes above the constitutional rights of children to be placed according to what is in their best interests.

Attorney Clint Bolick cited one case where a boy has been in foster care for four years. He said the foster parents he has been with are the only ones he has known and would have adopted him by now were the law not in the way.

But Bolick wants relief for more than that boy and another child. He is asking Wake to void the law on behalf of every Native American child not living on a reservation who is currently placed with a non-Indian family. Bolick put that number in Arizona at more than 1,300.

Such a ruling, he said, would put Native American children under the same rules that exist for non-Indian children who require placement that will be in their best interests.

In their responses, the attorneys for BIA and DCS picked apart the arguments.

For starters, they said, there is no evidence that either the children or the prospective adoptive parents are being harmed. They said without that proof there is no case for Wake to hear.

And they dispute Bolick's interpretation that the federal law precludes placement of Native American children with non-Indian families.

"The adoptive-placement preferences require no more than that extended family and tribal placements be considered," the federal lawyers said. "They do not direct any particular behavior by such persons or even require visitation prior to placement."

They said that preference helps ensure Indian children are not "unnecessarily removed from their families and tribes" while also protecting the rights of the Native American community and the tribe "in retaining its children in its society."

But they said state court judges can deviate from the preferences for "good cause."

"And the guidelines have consistently stated that both the request of the parents and the extraordinary physical and emotional needs of the child constitute good cause," the lawyers argued. "This permits a court to consider a child's particular circumstances, although it does not provide unfettered discretion (for a judge) to ignore the statutory preferences."

Finer legal points aside, much of the government's argument comes down to the contention that the law serves a valid purpose.

"Congress held extensive hearings, comprising hundreds of pages of testimony, that revealed that large number of Indian children were being removed from their families and tribes and placed in non-Indian homes and that this practice seriously harmed those children, families and tribes," the lawyers told Wake.

"Congress observed that most of these removals were not based on physical abuse but rather on ignorance of Indian cultural values and cultural norms," they continued. The attorney said that child welfare workers were discovering "neglect or abandonment where none exists."

The government lawyers also dispute other contentions by the plaintiffs, including that the children are being "forced to associate" with tribes which with they have no connection.

“Membership in a federally recognized tribe, or being born the child of a member of such a sovereign entity, is not a forced association,” they told Wake. They said the law “does not require association, but rather protects associations that already exist.”

They also disputed the ability of the foster parents to go to court in this case, saying they have no legally protected interest — one that could be enforced by a court — in the adoption of their foster children.

The lawyers also back up their contention that the law is based on political affiliation and not racial considerations by pointing out its limits.

Specifically, they said the law does not apply to children who may have Indian ancestry but are neither members of tribe nor eligible for membership as the child of a tribal member.

The lawsuit affects only Native American children not living on reservations, whether in homes with biological parents or placed with others. State laws on adoption and placement generally do not extend to tribal lands.

Read more: <http://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2015/10/19/agencies-defend-native-american-children-adoption-law/#ixzz3pJTSKzeZ>

Momentum created by North Dakota Native American official's White House work

By [Nick Smith, Bismarck Tribune](#) on Oct 19, 2015 at 5:30 a.m.

BISMARCK -- Months after her departure from the White House, state and federal leaders called the work of a North Dakota Native American official who helped guide policy with tribes nationwide a rare opportunity to improve tribal life.

Jodi Gillette served in Washington, D.C., in multiple positions from 2009 until May of this year, helping coordinate between the Barack Obama administration and tribal leaders.

Gillette, a member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, has since joined Washington, D.C.-based law firm Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Endreson and Perry LLP as its policy adviser. The firm represents Native American tribes for litigation, lobbying and economic development.

She splits time between her D.C. office and Bismarck, where she lives with her husband.

In 2008, Gillette was hired by Obama for America to oversee statewide operations of the First American voting efforts. During the campaign, she said she became excited over Obama's talk of Native American issues, including consulting with tribes on policy as well as veterans' issues.

"I hadn't heard a presidential candidate speak to those issues before," Gillette said. "Going from North Dakota into the White House was a pretty, I guess, it was a life-changing leap of faith."

She served as an associate director of intergovernmental affairs at the White House in 2009-2010. In 2011, Gillette joined the U.S. Department of the Interior as deputy assistant secretary for Indian Affairs and, in 2012, was named Special Assistant to the President for Native American Affairs.

Gillette said the president didn't have much background on tribal issues, and it took the administration time to get its bearings.

"He wanted to know what the tribal leaders had to say. He wanted to rekindle that fire and relationship," Gillette said.

To jumpstart a dialogue, the White House Tribal Nations Conference was created in 2009 and has been held each year since.

Sen. Heidi Heitkamp, D-N.D., said the move to consult with tribes is a big step.

"Far too often discussions are had without consultation. You've got to think of what happens in Indian country. They (officials) never think of tribal government as a political entity," Heitkamp said.

Another major achievement was the Violence Against Women Act reauthorization in 2013, which included language allowing tribal jurisdiction in cases of women who are assaulted by non-tribal men on tribal lands.

"The Violence Against Women Act reauthorization was very important to tribal members. It can't be understated," Gillette said.

An effort also was made to address numerous pieces of litigation between the federal government and tribes. Two major lawsuits were settled between the federal government and tribes with a combined value of more than \$3 billion expected to be sent to Native Americans. One of them involves a Standing Rock tribal member who sued the U.S. Department of Agriculture over loans denied to Native American farmers.

"We've been able to close the door on a time when the litigation was sort of defining the relationship," Gillette said. "It restores trust."

Obama also visited Cannon Ball in June 2014, an event Heitkamp called a major step in addressing tribal issues, particularly those involving tribal youth.

“That’s really a tribute to Jodi. Bringing him and taking some time with those kids will have long-term consequences,” Heitkamp said.

An emotional private encounter hearing the stories of tribal youth had an impact on Obama. Late last year, he announced several initiatives, including a report on challenges facing tribal youth, a project to support tribal schools and a national network to cultivate Native American leaders.

“It pushed the administration to a whole other level. That was when we really zeroed in,” Gillette said.

The efforts aren’t lost on tribal officials, including Gillette’s brother, Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Chairman Dave Archambault II.

“I can’t think of another administration more willing to put attention toward Indian Country,” Archambault told the Tribune late last year.

North Dakota Indian Affairs Commissioner Scott Davis said he was proud of Gillette’s efforts.

“What she’s done at that level, from North Dakota and from Standing Rock, has been amazing to watch,” Davis said.

Davis said having someone being able to give North Dakota and the Great Plains states’ tribes a voice was an added bonus. He said there’s a sense of optimism among tribal leaders that he hopes can continue.

To keep that optimism, Gillette said a push to maintain momentum is needed once a new president takes office.

“People are excited that there’s an opportunity for a lot of things to be completed while the president is still president,” Gillette said. “There’s a tendency to walk things back under a new administration. I hope this isn’t one of those.”

Direct Link: <http://www.grandforksherald.com/news/politics/3863676-momentum-created-north-dakota-native-american-officials-white-house-work>

Councilman to introduce motion for indigenous holiday

MARY HUDETZ Associated Press Published: October 19, 2015, 2:38 pm



ALBUQUERQUE (AP) – Albuquerque’s City Council president is expected to propose a measure that goes further in ensuring the second Monday of October each year is recognized as Indigenous Peoples Day during a meeting in which another councilor intends to introduce a motion to censure him.

Both Council President Rey Garduno’s push for an Indigenous Peoples Day resolution that would give the counter holiday to Columbus Day more permanence and Councilman Dan Lewis’ motion to censure are on the agenda for Monday evening.

The meeting comes a week after Albuquerque officially observed Indigenous Peoples Day for the first time through a proclamation introduced by Garduno. It made Albuquerque one of a growing number of cities to recognize a holiday honoring the history and contributions of indigenous cultures as the U.S. observed Columbus Day.

The federal holiday commemorating the 1492 voyage of Christopher Columbus has evolved over the years into cause for parades and pageantry by those seeking to honor the Italian explorer, and protest by those who argue his arrival to the Americas ushered in centuries of mistreatment of Native Americans.

“It’s an important step that many cities across the country have taken, and it’s especially important for our city because of its location, proximity, and relationship to the great Native nations of the Southwest,” Garduno said in a statement.

But Garduno’s proclamation put before councilors as they gathered for a meeting on Oct. 7 was hastily introduced and included “overtly political” language that read “as a not-so-subtle indictment” of the region’s European forebears, according to documents from Lewis that signaled he would motion to censure Garduno.

Lewis also took issue with public comments from Garduno that criticized councilors who did not sign the proclamation.

Six councilors signed the document and three did not, including Lewis. He said he recognizes the contribution of Native Americans and likely would have signed a

proclamation in recognition of their cultures if he was provided opportunity to suggest changes.

For councilors, that opportunity for input will come when the proposed resolution goes before the City Council, Garduno said. Unlike proclamations, resolutions are subject to more lengthy Council discussion and, if passed, must be signed by the mayor before becoming a city ordinance.

“While I personally stand by the language of the proclamation, I recognize that the City Council, by its very nature, is a place where compromise can result in more unanimous outcomes for the good of the community,” Garduno said. “I look forward to working with my City Council colleagues on that resolution as it works its way through the Council process.”

Direct Link: <http://krqe.com/2015/10/19/councilman-to-introduce-motion-for-indigenous-holiday/>

Demeaning mascots and skewed history lessons make school unfriendly, Native Americans say

Originally published October 20, 2015 at 5:00 am Updated October 21, 2015 at 12:10 pm

Native American youth, parents and advocates told federal officials that their efforts to make school more inviting are frequently dismissed or met with hostility, according to a report on a nine-city listening tour that concluded in Seattle last November.

By [John Higgins](#)
Seattle Times education reporter

Last fall, federal education officials asked Native Americans in seven states, including Washington, to tell them what was happening with their children in the nation’s public schools and colleges.

The last of nine sessions on the listening tour was held at the [Daybreak Star Cultural Center](#) in Seattle’s Discovery Park in late November.

Seattle speakers raised concerns about unfair discipline, the bureaucratic hurdles involved in filing federal civil rights complaints and the need for more accurate portrayals of Native American culture and history in school lessons.

Their comments are summarized in [a report](#) that was announced at the [National Indian Education Association](#) conference in Portland last week.

The report, which looks at ways to improve the school environment for Native Americans, is [part of an initiative](#) President Obama launched by executive order in 2011 to support expanding opportunities and improving education outcomes for American Indian and Alaska Native students.

“Through their tears, hurt, and anger, participants voiced their concerns regarding the conditions they experience in schools and institutions of higher education,” said William Mendoza, the initiative’s executive director, in a letter introducing the report.

He said efforts to improve school environments aren’t including Native Americans, whose concerns and complaints are “frequently dismissed or met with hostility. Native youth, parents, and advocates say they are alone in their efforts to address these issues and that circumstances are often unbearable.”

More than 1,000 students, educators and parents spoke on a range of issues, including how Native Americans are represented both in the history books and in the choice of school mascots and logos. Some of those speakers are quoted in the report and identified by their tribal affiliations.

Washington’s [tribal history curriculum](#) was praised when the listening tour stopped in Oklahoma City.

“We need to make Native American studies a mandatory course, even if just for one credit. Washington State is working on incorporating lesson plans based on Washington tribes’ language and history. This is a thing we could do in Oklahoma because we have a large Native population,” said Johnnie Jae Morris (Otoe-Missouria/Choctaw).

But speakers at the Seattle session said Washington still has room for improvement.

“Our music teacher makes us sing patriotic songs with lyrics like, ‘pilgrims’ pride; land where my fathers died; let freedom ring.’ This is offensive to me,” said Lakota Dimond (Hunkpapa Lakota).

And an anthropologist said kids need to know more about the lives of contemporary Native Americans.

“Eighty-seven percent of the representations of Native Americans in the curriculum today in the United States are pre-1900. That’s ridiculous in 2014,” said Chad Uran (White Earth Anishinaabe).

Direct Link: <http://www.seattletimes.com/education-lab/demeaning-mascots-and-skewed-history-lessons-makes-school-unfriendly-for-native-americans/>

Here's What Happens When Native Americans Try on "Indian" Halloween Costumes

By [Theresa Avila](#) October 19, 2015

Like Mic on Facebook:

Alongside witches, vampires and superheroes, "Indian" costumes are a common feature of classic Halloween dress-up. Unlike those three costumes, Indian costumes have a consistent way of being downright disrespectful.

Especially to Native Americans.

It's a point underscored in a [BuzzFeed video](#) where young Native Americans try on "Indian" Halloween costumes and share their candid reactions. The costumes have names like "Indian Brave," "Chief Indian Hottie" and "Tribal Temptation" — names that play into long-held stereotypes about Native Americans and reduce a group of people to one-dimensional characters.

Just saying the costume names feels wrong, one woman says in the video.

As each of the four people in the video tries on a different costume, it's apparent historical and cultural accuracy have not factored in. (One man calls the level of accuracy a "negative 4,000" on a scale of 1 to 10.) Instead, the costumes are rife with stereotypical visual shorthands, like feathers, beadwork, plenty of fringe and even an axe.

What's often lost with these symbols, of course, is the deeply regarded cultural and [sacred symbolism](#) that comes with the Native American headdress — practices that continue to this day. Feather headdresses, for example, are reserved for only certain individuals in Native American communities.

Misusing them only further perpetuates the erasure of Native American culture, Jessica R. Metcalfe, creator of [Beyond Buckskin](#), a boutique and blog about Native American fashion, [previously told Mic](#).

There are [562 Native American nations](#) that are culturally, linguistically and ethnically diverse. "Playing Indian" on Halloween neglects the diversity of a living community that's historically been [marginalized and persecuted](#) over time.

The net effect is the stripping away of culture. "A costume like this keeps Native Americans in the past, as if we're not real people today," one of the two men featured in the video says. "There actually something that feels pretty disrespectful about wearing a people group as a costume," says the other.

Needless to say, Native American culture continues living. While stereotypes about "Indians" continue, there's a [younger generation](#) of contemporary Native American designers who are incorporating their culture and history into their work as a way of helping respect tradition while making it accessible to a wider population. The best part is it can be appreciated year-round, not just on a holiday like Halloween.

That, of course, is pretty much missed entirely with dumb costumes made of polyester and stereotypes.

Direct Link: <http://mic.com/articles/126956/here-s-what-happens-when-native-americans-try-on-indian-halloween-costumes>

Archaeological Dig Underway At Boston Common

October 19, 2015 5:23 PM



Boston City Archaeologist Joe Bagley and crew are digging this week on the Common near the Parkman Bandstand. (Photo by Lana Jones/WBZ NewsRadio 1030)

BOSTON (CBS) — The city started an archaeological dig for Revolutionary War-era artifacts and also a Native American settlement at the Boston Common on Monday.

The Boston Landmarks Commission team is searching for a British camp from the war, and also the Native American settlement dating back more than 1,000 years. They want to [clear](#) the area of its historic relics before Eversource runs a utility line at the site.

There have been several digs at the Common in the past, each revealing hundreds of artifacts with stories to tell. The last time a dig took place at the site, located east of the Parkman Bandstand under a path that was built in the 1990s, was in the 1980s.



City archaeologists dig for artifacts at Boston Common on Monday. (Photo by Lana Jones/WBZ NewsRadio 1030)

City Archaeologist Joe Bagley says the Native American settlement could be the oldest ever uncovered.

“It could be up to 10,000 years apart,” he told WBZ NewsRadio 1030’s Lana Jones. “We have tested here before. We have physical evidence of artifacts between 400 and 1,000 years old, but that was just a certain area of the site.

“We haven’t tested the whole thing and this is going to be more testing than was done in the past.”

Stopping the utility dig is a necessary step to preserve history.

“Blocking the access to the site in many ways is the same as destroying the site,” Bagley says, “Because if you can’t get to it, no one’s going to be able to use it. So in this case if there’s anything left, we’re going to remove it entirely before the line goes through.”

Artifacts collected from the site will be preserved at the Boston Archaeological Lab in West Roxbury. It’ll take a few days to examine the entire site.

Direct Link: <http://boston.cbslocal.com/2015/10/19/archaeological-dig-underway-at-boston-common/>

Building climate resilience in Native American communities

[Kat Friedrich](#)

Tuesday, October 20, 2015 - 12:30am

In the Navajo Nation, electricity may be a fragile commodity as climate change intensifies. Other tribes in the United States face similar energy quandaries. The United States Department of Energy (DOE) announced Sept. 2 that it is requesting applications to co-fund renewable energy, energy efficiency and [combined heat and power](#) to help increase the climate resilience of indigenous communities. The available funding is estimated to total around \$4 million to \$6 million. Applications are due by Dec. 10.

For facility-scale installations, the amount of the source energy that must be displaced is 20 percent — and for renewable energy and/or combined heat and power, projects should produce at least 10 kW, said Lizana Pierce, project manager at DOE's Office of Indian Energy. For community-scale installations, there is no minimum source-energy percentage, but the renewable energy and combined heat and power system must produce at least 50 kW.

The report details a region-by-region breakdown of climate impacts on tribal lands, providing concrete examples of risks that communities already face.

These grants could prove to be quite valuable for local energy reliability. Native communities "spend a lot of time trying to obtain resources," said [William Smith](#), an anthropology professor from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. (Smith participated in a [video interview](#) about his research on climate change's effects on Native American communities in Nevada.)

According to a September DOE report, "[Tribal Energy System Vulnerabilities to Climate Change and Extreme Weather](#)," climate change can cause droughts, heat waves, wildfires, permafrost unreliability, warmer weather and erosion. It also can increase the intensity of floods, storms and downpours.

This unnerving list of risks varies based on geography. The report details a region-by-region breakdown of climate impacts on tribal lands, providing concrete examples of risks that communities already face. It covers all tribal lands and Alaskan native villages in the continental United States.

Some climate-related impacts can be softened through local resilience strategies. For example, air conditioning expenses can be lowered substantially. This is a key consideration for communities facing economic hardship and high electricity or fuel costs. Clean energy also can help to shield indigenous communities from the effects of fuel-supply disruption.

However, intensified storms, coastal and riverbank erosion, ice-melting patterns, heavy rainfall and [permafrost](#) damage are all due to the large-scale effects of climate change. So they cannot be entirely addressed by the clean-energy interventions outlined in this grant. Energy-resilience measures can help to reduce the likelihood of blackouts, but they cannot address these issues comprehensively.

The report does not propose any specific responses for these weather-related hazards.

Additional funding for climate-impact resilience could help communities respond to the imminent challenges that local clean energy cannot solve.

Saving the power grid

Basic infrastructure on tribal lands is vulnerable to climate-induced damage.

How fragile are these community resources? More than one might think on casual observation.

One example the report outlined is from the Southwest. Climate change can cause heat waves, wildfires and severe storms, all of which might put electric service at risk in the Navajo Nation. The reservation uses electricity to power its fuel-transport equipment. Electric pumps move crude oil through the Running Horse Pipeline, owned by the Navajo Nation. Electricity also enables the Black Mesa and Lake Powell Railroad to bring coal to the Navajo Generating Station.

Two thermoelectric power plants are on the reservation. These plants require cooling water from Lake Powell and the San Juan River. And their water supply and temperature can be affected by climate change, which leads to droughts and increases hot weather.

These power plants also operate two massive irrigation systems that deliver water to regional tribal lands.

Keeping energy affordable

Rate increase also can be harmful to tribal communities, so taking proactive steps to bring in renewable energy, [cogeneration](#) and energy efficiency can help to avert the blow of increased costs.

At the end of 2014, the report said, residents of the Sault Sainte Marie Reservation in Michigan's Upper Peninsula found that an electricity rate increase to cover power plant upgrades raised their monthly bills by 30 percent.

The Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians said the effects would be "devastating," according to the report.

Energy efficiency, distributed renewable energy and cogeneration all can assist in lowering the cost of electricity in tribal communities.

The report said Alaska's situation is particularly acute. In rural areas, native villages use diesel generators, which can be expensive to operate. The cost of diesel varies substantially, causing unexpected economic challenges for these small communities.

Native villages in Alaska receive diesel via barge or airplane. Airplane shipments are particularly costly.

Responding to winter storms

Constructing wind power installations can help to reduce the cost of energy in rural Alaska, the report said, but wind turbines are affected by the harsh storms in coastal areas. These storms may become more intense due to climate-related variability. This results in ice buildup on the turbines. Sometimes, the turbines may even send ice flying into the air. Ice also can put rotor blades out of balance and even bring down measurement towers.

In 2011, a coastal storm ruined the Alaska Village Electric Cooperative's new [power transmission intertie](#) before it was put into use, the report said. The cooperative was not able to repair the intertie before another coastal storm damaged it in 2013.

Ice and snow also can overload power lines in Alaska, causing poles to snap, the report said. Power lines covered with ice also may vibrate violently during high winds. After the ice melts, the lines may rebound and make contact with trees.

Adjusting to permafrost failures and ice jams

The report also described how permafrost weaknesses and [ice jams](#) can create electrical and fuel hazards in Alaska.

Permafrost problems due to climate change can cause power poles to tip or sag. The poles may be lifted up by [frost jacking](#). Permafrost failure also can affect other distribution and grid equipment.

Air transport runways used for fuel shipments also can be damaged by unreliable permafrost.

Ice jams along rivers can flood native villages in Alaska unexpectedly. A Yukon River ice jam destroyed 90 percent of the structures in the village of Galena in 2013. Fuel-storage tanks were knocked over and sometimes leaked into the river. Two other communities were threatened.

Preparing for floods

Climate change leads to riverbank and coastal erosion, particularly in Alaska. Because the bank of the Koyukuk River is eroding rapidly, a power plant has been relocated inland.

Climate change can cause droughts, heat waves, wildfires, permafrost unreliability, warmer weather and erosion. It also can increase the intensity of floods, storms and downpours.

In the Northwest, flooding may disrupt inland power plants serving tribal lands. Four power plants in the Puget Sound region are less than 4 feet above sea level and may be damaged by waves or storm surges.

Extinguishing the effects of fires

Wildfires are more common as climate affects average temperatures and causes droughts. These are becoming more frequent throughout the western United States — including Alaska.

In Alaska, wildfires can lead to unsafe conditions around fuel-transportation lines. In 2014, a wildfire near the Trans Alaska Pipeline System led to deployment of water trucks, sprinkler systems and bulldozers.

Soot, heat and smoke from wildfires can cause widespread disruption of electricity service in rural areas, including on tribal lands and in native villages.

Direct Link: <http://www.greenbiz.com/article/building-climate-resilience-native-american-communities>

Kansas to preserve its only Native American pueblo

By Austin Fisher afisher@gctelegram.com

Oct 19, 2015

LAKE SCOTT — State officials and local historians have launched an effort to preserve El Cuartelejo, the only known Native American pueblo in Kansas.

The Scott State Park Historic Preservation and Development Committee announced on Monday a \$1 million interpretive center to enclose what remains of the ruins of El Cuartelejo, to be built in collaboration with the Kansas Historical Society and the Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism.

“Lake Scott State Park and the surrounding area is a jewel of Kansas hidden no more,” Gov. Sam Brownback said to an audience of park rangers and guests during the announcement at the park. “America is finding the beauty in Kansas, and as Kansans we are talking about our beauty and the wonder of our state more.”

Brownback said the preservation effort is “a recognition of the First Nations.”

The pueblo, a seven-room structure built using stone from the surrounding hills, housed a band of Plains Apache and the Tiwa-speaking Taos Pueblo people, who fled the Spanish Empire as it conquered their lands in what is now New Mexico during the 17th century.

According to Spanish colonial records, in 1696, another Tiwa-speaking group from New Mexico, named the Picuris Pueblo, arrived at the village that became known as El Cuartelejo, about 12 miles north of what is now Scott City.

C. A. Tsosie, a Tiwa-speaking tribal elder, member of the Picuris Pueblo and veteran of the Vietnam War, said Monday that the site is “a sanctuary for all of America.”

“We believe that all of you are indigenous,” Tsosie said. “Indigenous is a new word for us, I don’t even know how to spell it, but all of you here are from here. The locals are the ones that started all of this.”

Wind gusted at 38 mph at Lake Scott State Park on Monday afternoon as Brownback learned from Tsosie how pueblos like El Cuartelejo are built.

Greg Mills, who manages the 1,280-acre park, said wind erosion and vandalism are the two biggest threats to El Cuartelejo.

“The wind through here is pretty intense,” Mills said. “And with a building on it (the ruins), you’re gonna be able to control traffic. Right now, at 2 in the morning, anybody could just go down there with a shovel and we would never recover the site.”

The Scott State Park Historic Preservation and Development Committee named Scott City artist Jerry Thomas as committee chairman to lead the construction, interpretation and preservation effort.

“This park is not just a heritage, this is our heritage. It is Kansas, Scott County, the entire southwest region,” Thomas said.

Funding for the interpretive center will come from grants, private donations and any other sources the committee can find, Thomas said.

Schematics for the interpretive center will be completed in the coming months, he said.

The Kansas chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution owned the property from 1921 until selling it to the state parks department in 2012.

Sammie Cope, Honorary State Regent of the Kansas DAR, said the site is in good hands.

“Nothing is really ended until it’s forgotten,” Cope said. “Whatever is kept in your memory, it will endure.”

Tsosie blessed the site after he and Brownback cut the ribbon for it.

Direct Link: http://www.gctelegram.com/news/local/kansas-to-preserve-its-only-native-american-pueblo/article_dfa53851-9407-570d-8b8e-006dba84a7e2.html

Ypsilanti to consider renaming Columbus Day 'Indigenous Peoples Day'



The Ypsilanti City Council will consider renaming Columbus Day. *(File photo)*

By [Tom Perkins](#) | [Special to The Ann Arbor News](#)

on October 20, 2015 at 5:35 AM, updated October 20, 2015 at 11:54 PM

Should Columbus Day be renamed "Indigenous People's Day?"

The Ypsilanti City Council will consider the idea at its Tuesday meeting.

The proposal and resolution was brought forth by Mayor Amanda Edmond, who noted in the resolution that the Odawa, Ojibwe, Potawatomi and Wyandot tribes lived in the area for hundreds of years before the city was founded.

The resolution states that "the city of Ypsilanti understands that in order to help close the equity gap, government entities, organizations and other public institutions should change their policies and practices to better reflect experiences of Native American people and uplift our country's Indigenous roots, history, and contributions ..."

It continues that Ypsilanti "recognizes that dislocation, disease, war, disenfranchisement and other atrocities devastated these communities at different times, causing most indigenous peoples to be expelled from their homes in this area by the 1830s ... "

Ypsilanti wouldn't be alone in renaming the holiday, which fell on Oct. 12 this year. Nationally, Seattle, Minneapolis and Berkeley, California, each have done so. In Michigan, Traverse City and Alpena changed Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day.

Edmonds wrote in the resolution that the idea of renaming the holiday was first proposed in 1977 by a delegation of Native nations to the United Nations-sponsored International Conference on Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations in the Americas.

In 1990 representatives from 120 indigenous nations at the First Continental Conference on 500 Years of Indian Resistance unanimously passed a resolution to change Columbus Day to a day that will educate people on indigenous cultures and the often violent colonization process.

The Ypsilanti City Council meets at 7 p.m. in the Eastern Michigan University McKenny Hall ballroom.

Direct Link: http://www.mlive.com/news/ann-arbor/index.ssf/2015/10/ypsilanti_to_consider_renaming.html

700 Acres of Sonoma County to Be Returned to Native American Tribe

By [Joe Rosato Jr.](#)

Sonoma County leaders have agreed to return 700 acres of land to a Native American tribe. Joe Rosato Jr. reports. (Published Tuesday, Oct. 20, 2015)

The crashing waves along the jagged Sonoma coastline near Stewart's Point reverberated through the soul of Walter Antone. He heard the deep layers of years in each slap of wave against rock — the childhood he spent fishing along the cliffs with his father — and even father back when his ancestors would fish and gather abalone and mussels along the same cliffs.

"We're from the coast," Antone said, gazing out at the point where cliff gave way to water. "We're coast Indians and we live off the ocean."

Antone grew up not far away from the spot, on the 40 acre Kashia band of Pomo Indians reservation. By the time Antone was born, the Kashia had long been cut-off from their native coastal lands — a coastal tribe without access to the coast. As a boy, Antone's father had to ask permission of the land owners to access the same cliffs which once fed his ancestors. These days, tribal members sometimes snuck through the fences in order to conduct traditional coming-of-age ceremonies.

"Made me feel shutout," Antone said. "It's land where we used to go before but now you can't — we're fenced off."

But in a groundbreaking land sale, 700 acres of coastal lands will return soon to Kashia control for the first time in 200 years. Sonoma County leaders voted last week to pledge

more than \$2 million to a coalition of groups which have raised \$6 million to purchase the one mile strip of coastal land from a private family, ensuring its future as open space.

“They’re a coastal people, but for generations they haven’t had access to the coast,” said Brendan Moriarty of the Trust For Public Land, which spearheaded the deal. “This property’s going to give them their coast back.”

The sprawling piece of land included groves of old redwoods, hilltop views, Native American archaeological sites and the precipitous cliffs opening up to the Pacific Ocean just north of Salt Point State Park. The deal will preserve the land as open space while giving the control to the Kashia who plan to preserve the land and return the forests to resiliency.

“We’re going to manage this forest to become an old growth forest,” said Kashia Tribal Chairman Reno Keoni Franklin. “I will see that in my lifetime.”

The deal will allow for public access with a trail running along the cliffs — also giving the Kashia a spectacular platform to tell the history of its people. The land’s original house will eventually become a museum.

“The general public come to portions of this land,” Franklin said. “Let’s let Kashia educate them instead of somebody else educate them about us.”

The one mile strip of land has been in Bill Richardson’s family since 1925. The original house and barn date back to 1885. Richardson’s family survived by raising sheep and cattle on the property. Richardson, who still resides in the house, grew up in the isolated paradise.

“It could be lonely, there’s a lot of places to roam,” Richardson said. “But I cherish it now, most people don’t get that opportunity to grow up here.”

But Richardson felt the time had come to finally return the family land back to its original family — the Kashia. The sales agreement reached with the coalition allows for Richardson to live out the rest of his life in the family home — and eventually be buried on the hilltop overlooking the sea, not far from the graves of his parents.

“I want to see it be a working ranch,” Richardson said, referring to its future with the Kashia, “just a beautiful place for everyone — especially for them.”

Antone regarded the wooden fence he and his father would scale to get to the fishing grounds. The slats of the fence were tired and worn and a sign reading ‘private property,’ was tattered with the elements. Antone inhaled the breeze carrying a perfume of sea, clutched his cane and let his eyes soak in the view.

“I feel like we got something back finally,” he said. “After all these years.”

Direct Link: <http://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/700-Acres-of-Sonoma-County-to-Be-Returned-to-Native-American-Tribe-334834751.html>

Loan office serves Native Americans

Tony Gorder, For the Sioux Falls Business Journal 10:30 p.m. CDT October 20, 2015



Juel Burnette left Wells Fargo & Co. last year after a 23-year career with a specific focus as the Sioux Falls branch manager of 1st Tribal Lending.

“We’re a mortgage company that’s focusing on providing home loans and homeownership opportunities to Native Americans on and off the reservation nationwide,” Burnette said.

Burnette wasn’t alone. The other three loan officers are former Wells Fargo employees, all of whom have years of experience working together in lending to Native Americans.

The office of 1st Tribal Lending, a division of Mid America Mortgage, is at 1300 W. 57th St.

“The beauty of this was our clientele came with us I think due to experience, so we didn’t have a big loss there,” said loan officer Eric Sprenkle. “The tribes, they reached out to us and wanted to continue to do business with us. They have a trust in us ... because of that experience we have.”

The Sioux Falls branch of 1st Tribal Lending is the easternmost branch for the lender, which specializes in using the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 184 Indian Home Loan Guarantee Program. Other branches are in California, Arizona, Oregon, Washington and Oklahoma.

The program was created in 1992 as a way to remedy the lack of home loans to Native Americans.

“There weren’t a lot of lenders out there that were participating in bringing mortgage capital to Indian Country, specifically on the reservation,” Burnette said, “so this was the government’s way of trying to entice lenders to open up their doors.”

The program enables lenders to give loans for land held in tribal trusts and allows lenders to give loans not just to tribal members but also to tribes and tribal housing authorities.

“It’s unique in that way that it’s the only program that allows a non-individual to be the borrower,” Burnette said. “We’ve done several projects for tribes and tribal housing authorities, so they can provide homes to their tribal membership also. They typically do that to help those families that aren’t quite ready today or if they just want to build on their current rental stock they have or add to it.”

And Native Americans don’t need to live on tribal lands to take advantage of the program.

“It’s open up to the entire state of South Dakota, and there’s some misconception about that because a lot of lenders and tribal members think you have to be on the reservation in order use the program, and that’s not the case,” Sprenkle said. “If you’re a Native American here in Sioux Falls, you can utilize the program.

According to HUD, the Indian Home Loan Guarantee Program has been used for more than 24,000 loans. In South Dakota, the program has been used for 482 loans.

Burnette estimated that his team is responsible for most of the Section 184 loans in South Dakota, but 1st Tribal lends nationwide, with the majority of loans going to Florida.

“Everywhere where there’s a population of Indian people and our program is allowed in that state, we’re licensed in those states,” Burnette said.

Burnette is a member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, and he grew up on the Rosebud Indian Reservation. He said that has had a positive affect on his working relationships.

“Working with native people, we tend to want to look like who we’re doing business with on the other side of the table,” Burnette said. “My entire mortgage banking career has been serving Indian Country. There’s very few of us in the arena and very few of us that have been around for that long.”

Though he said the use of the program has grown dramatically over the years, Burnette calls those number “a drop in the bucket” considering the size of the Native American population. One of the main reasons more people aren’t using the program, according to Burnette, is because they don’t know it exists.

“If Eric and I had a dollar for everytime we had someone call us and tell us, ‘Well, geez, I never heard about this program,’ we’d have several hundred dollars in our pockets,” Burnette said. “It isn’t prejudice against anybody. It’s just the lack of education and knowing what’s really out there, from the Realtor community to the lender community.”

“There’s still a lot of work to be done,” Burnette added. “We’re taking it one step at a time, one loan at a time.”

Direct Link: <http://www.argusleader.com/story/news/business-journal/2015/10/20/loan-office-serves-native-americans/74297828/>

Native American Language Bill Passes U.S. Senate Committee



United States Senator Brian Schatz. U.S. Senate photo.

Posted on October 21, 2015

by Big Island Now Staff

Legislation having to do with the Native Language Immersion Student Achievement Act, which was introduced by United States Senators Brian Schatz, Jon Tester, Martin Heinrich, Heidi Heitkamp, and Tom Udall, was advanced by the Senate Affairs Committee on Wednesday.

The Native Language Immersion Student Achievement Act creates a new grant initiative to establish or expand Native language immersion programs. Under the bill, overhead costs would be limited and resource demands on tribal and school administrators seeking language immersion funding would be reduced.

“Language is vital to every culture, and schools like Nawahiokalaniopuu on Hawai‘i Island have shown us how Native language education can revive a once near-extinct language and help preserve the traditions and customs of Native communities,” said Senator Schatz, a member of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee. “With today’s key

vote, we are one step closer to strengthening Native language schools and programs in Hawai‘i and across the country and ensuring the Hawaiian language and many others continue to thrive.”

According to the proposing senators, the grants will support the revitalization and maintenance of indigenous languages while increasing educational opportunities for Native Hawaiian, American Indian, and Alaska Native students.

“I’m glad this bill has passed another milestone in the legislative process, because it is much needed and so important for schools like Ke Kula O Nawahiokalaniopuu that are using our own native American language as the medium of instruction,” said Kauanoë Kamana, Director of Ke Kula O Nawahiokalaniopuu. “For us in Hawai‘i where such schooling now serves approximately 3,000 students statewide, this support is greatly needed by parents and teachers to support growing demand. It is exciting that Senator Schatz has been able to help advance this bill on our behalf.”

The grant program totals \$5 million per year for five years and grants can be awarded to tribes, tribal organizations, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and public or private schools to establish or expand existing immersion classes for students ranging from Pre-K through post-secondary education levels.

“We could not have asked for better champions than Senator Tester and Senator Schatz,” said Leslie Harper, Director of the National Coalition of Native American Language Schools and Programs. “They have a firm grasp of the issues and a strong commitment to native communities within their own states and across the nation. The establishment of new programs to support Native American language medium schools is critically important for our children that represent the future of American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian communities. Without such schools, the languages of their ancestors will remain out of the reach of our children, and unique academic benefits of indigenous language schools will be lost to them as well.”

There are about 148 remaining Native languages in the United States that are at the risk of extinction within the next 50 to 100 years.

Direct Link: <http://bigislandnow.com/2015/10/21/native-american-language-bill-passes-u-s-senate-committee/>

South Dakota Medicaid proposal would also boost Native American care

Posted: Wed 5:30 PM, Oct 21, 2015



PIERRE - South Dakota's early proposal to expand Medicaid also focuses on improving access to care for the state's large Native American population.

The Health Care Solutions Coalition met Wednesday in Pierre.

The panel is discussing in part the proposal's impact on Native Americans, who make up nearly 9 percent of the state's population. Medicaid is a health coverage program for low-income and disabled people.

Jerilyn Church is chief executive of the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Health Board. She says the plan to help fund the state's share of Medicaid expansion would also benefit the health and access to care of tribal members.

Kim Malsam-Rysdon is a senior adviser to Gov. Dennis Daugaard. She says the proposal will need a broad array of support from tribes and the federal government.

Direct Link: <http://www.ksfy.com/home/headlines/South-Dakota-Medicaid-proposal-would-also-boost-Native-American-care-335288971.html>

Column: Native American Heritage Day and the modern economy

By Westfair Online

October 22, 2015

by Joseph Matthews

Supported by 184 federally recognized tribes, President George W. Bush designated the Friday after Thanksgiving as Native American Heritage Day to pay tribute to Native Americans for their many contributions to the United States. The designation encourages

Americans to observe the day through ceremonies and activities and promotes the understanding of Native American heritage and culture in the classroom. This year, it falls on Nov. 27.

Native American history, achievements, music, language and, of course, native arts and crafts, are to be recognized, but I believe the program would be incomplete without a mention of the traditional Native American currency, wampum.

In the world of finance, it is the history of wampum that contains lessons relevant not only to modern times, but current events. The value of wampum and its ultimate demise as a predominant medium of exchange in the New World bear remarkable similarities to today's currency fluctuations.

Wampum essentially consisted of stringed beads made from various mollusk shells. The finished product could be used as currency, and it also was seen as sacred in some native societies. For either reason, it also gave the bearer a certain status or rank.

Initially the beads were all white, with the earliest types coming from the channeled whelk shell, which were the most valuable. The conch and the cockleshell were two other popular sources of white beads. However, more decorative wampum strings or belts could be made from the purple layers of various clam shells including the quahog, and they too held value.

When European settlers arrived in the New World in the 1600s, however, they soon found that, to trade with the native people, they too would need wampum. It wasn't long before the industrious Europeans were turning out their own wampum, which served well as a form of currency for a period.

However, the new arrivals also were the bearers of Industrial Age tools, such as the awl, which proved very efficient at boring holes in the shells so they could be attached to strings. In fact, they were so efficient, that the market was soon glutted with so much wampum that the strings and belts that once took time and labor to produce were devalued and went out of favor.

Can anyone say Yuan? How about Greenbacks? Or Euros?

There are many lessons to be learned from the Native American production and use of wampum. At its very basis, someone had to wade in the waters of places like Narragansett Bay or Long Island Sound to select the best mollusks to make the best beads. Then they had to painstakingly create holes in the beads so they could be strung into belts and it didn't hurt to have a good eye for design when different colors were used. Both the labor involved and the type of material gave the wampum strings or belts a very real value.

Ostensibly the best native craftspeople who made the most attractive belts would also find more value in their products than the less refined versions. But when a form of mass production was introduced into the process the natural result was currency devaluation.

With all the turmoil in today's financial markets, it would serve us well to remember these lessons when planning our investment strategies. A thoughtfully created investment portfolio can help counterbalance the ebbs and flows of inflation, economic cycles and the buying power of our currency.

There are many avenues available in Connecticut for those seeking to reconnect to Native American culture, including Friends of the State Office of Archaeology and Connecticut Indian Affairs Council, along with websites governed by each of the tribal councils. These websites, along with corresponding events organized by various committees, might very well be worth a look, if for no other reason than to broaden your understanding of this culture and its unique early form of currency. You may be surprised how its strengths and weaknesses are mirrored in today's financial markets.

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Direct Link: <http://westfaironline.com/75101/column-native-american-heritage-day-and-the-modern-economy/>

First "indigenous Olympics" to kick off in Brazil



Indigenous from the Kibatsa ethnic group leave their headdresses on the sidelines of a soccer game at the World Indigenous Games in Palmas, Brazil, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2015.

October 22, 2015, 4:22 PM

PALMAS, Brazil -- What's billed as the first "indigenous Olympics" is set to kick off with some 2,000 athletes from around the world at a remote sunbaked city in northern Brazil.

The first edition of the games officially opens in Palmas on Friday, but the event's soccer tournament got underway on Thursday.



Gaviao indigenous children watch a soccer game during the World Indigenous Games in Palmas, Brazil, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2015.

Participants came from dozens of Brazilian ethnicities, as well as from such far-flung nations such as Ethiopia and New Zealand.

On Thursday a small group of Brazilian indigenous people staged a protest denouncing what they say is poor organization and unnecessary spending on the World Indigenous Games.

About a dozen protesters decried the multi-million dollar price tag, saying the money would be better spent on improving the conditions of Brazil's impoverished indigenous peoples.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/first-indigenous-olympics-to-kick-off-in-brazil/>